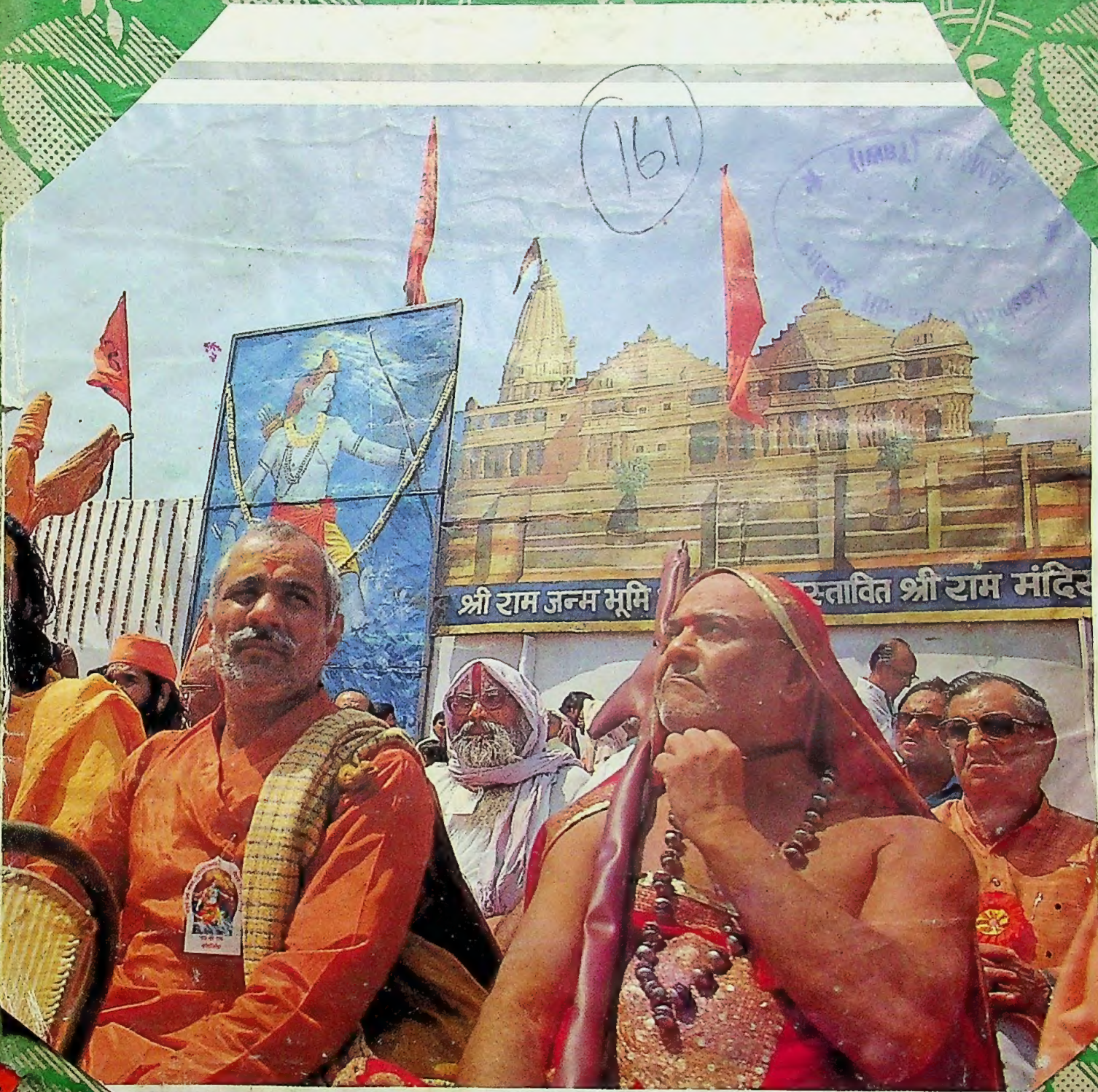


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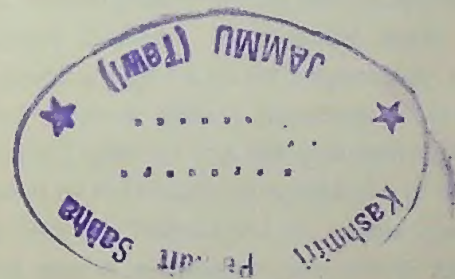
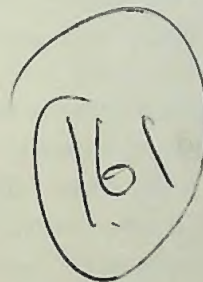


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THE GOSPEL OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Recorded
by
SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA



ANANDASHRAM

Anandashram, P. O. 670 531, Kanhangad, Dist. Kasaragod

KERALA, India

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FOREWORD

Sri Ramdas, called 'Papa', evolved in a way which may well seem somewhat incredible to all who want to fathom the miracle deep of sainthood. By 'miracle' I want to stress what appears to Reason as the recondite mystery which makes sainthood's flowering fulfilment so baffling to the mind. Ramdas started indeed, like a postulant, with *japa* but bore down everything that stood in the way with an astonishing ease and a regal gait.

His father had given him the Gurumantra, *Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram* (by *Ram* he meant *Krishna* also) which like a miracle seed of Godlove, blossomed in his heart's pure soil into the beautiful lotus of ecstatic bhakti. They were all amazed, his father, relatives and neighbours, to whom he appeared like an enigma which had to be seen to be believed. I will not try to give a cogent, historical account of his swift homecoming to the haven of his Lord's feet inasmuch as he has himself related graphically in his books how his heart opened and self-will merged in delight in the All-Will of the Divine, culminating in renunciation of his private worldly life. Many an aspirant hears, indeed, His call in the heart, but only a handful are chosen, the rare saints, who choose to be chosen. Being a wonderful raconteur, he has given a fascinating account of his spiritual pilgrimage, an account which has already been acclaimed gratefully by many an authentic spiritual seeker. It is the old and ever new (*sanatan-punarnava*) adventure of the devotee yearning nostalgically to the soul's eternal sky and nest—at once the zenith and asylum of Grace Divine. In a good many of his revealing talks in these pages, seekers of the psychic light will find episodes of rare wisdom alternating with his simple laughter and humour which punctuate his heart-warming recital leading us ever on like 'the Kindly Light' of the famous psalm. In fact Ramdas did come to us as the beneficent invasion of Krishna's compassion to help us repel life's teeming shadows with its native lustre. This is not an overstatement: we have experienced the Lord's Grace time and again whenever we have had the blessed opportunity of contacting his pristine child-soul of inviolate purity which the elect alone are endowed with.

Only one thing I must add here to acknowledge a personal debt namely that Ramdas did come to bless me as a "messenger of the Incommunicable" Krishna who is "hidden in every heart."*

*The messenger of the Incommunicable. . . . SAVITRI. . . . Sri Aurobindo. "In every heart is hidden the Myriad One. . . ."

This I say not only to hail his endearing sanctity, but also and primarily to emphasize that I felt in him over and over again the redeeming touch of Krishna, my best Beloved, whose fleeting contact only deepened my yearning to make Him abide with me. Since my adolescence I have offered my love, such as it is, at His lotus feet and repeated His name in the deepest crises of my life. I told Ramdas all about it when he came to bless us at Poona and stayed with us for three rapturous days in our humble cottage. Indira and I sang in joy, morning and evening, to him and his great disciple Mother Krishnabai who is indeed bhakti personified. As for me, I found in him not only a guiding angel but a sweet friend and monitor in my quest when my great Guru Sri Aurobindo had passed away leaving me all but derelict. Often I felt he had come to me at the psychological moment as an answer of Grace to my prayer, to assure me that he had conveyed my petition to the Lord to make me His own and mould me to His Will. We were both verily, intoxicated! For was it not a dream come true—a Bird of Paradise come to us earthlings with his songs of Godlove and tales of a God's nursling who not only walked with Him but had a living communion with Him day after blessed day!

As I have written about his talks with me elsewhere* I will quote here just one remark of his. Once I asked him: "Tell me Papa, how can one attain Him, the Elusive Swain"? "By wanting him not among other things, but above other things," he answered at once. "To give a simile: You are running to catch a train. A pedestrain calls to you. You say: 'Not now—afterwards. I have to catch a train.' In other words, look upon Him as the Quest of quests, the Light of lights, the heart's One Prince and Swain."

The talks recorded here (*The Gospel of Swami Ramdas*) cannot but prove eminently helpful to seekers of every stripe. For Ramdas had transcended even in the first phase of his sadhana the grievous and clinging limitations of the mind. He homed in the Elysium of the spirit and although he advised every seeker to eschew formalism and ritualism, he told them that these too could be of help if we were on guard against dogmatism, the curd which soured the milk of human kindness. He told us time and again that Divine Love in its flawless purity could never brook narrowness, parochialism, untouchability and foolish assertiveness.

To give an instance in point to illustrate how spontaneously he could answer questions.

On page 295 a devotee named Subbaiyar asks: "Papa, does He not know that we are thinking of Him constantly?"

Papa: "Where is that man who is thinking of Him constantly? Let Ramdas see him."

*Kumbha, *The Flute Calls Still, Pilgrims Of The Stars*.

Subbaiyar : "I am, Papa."

Papa : "If you have been thinking of Him always, you must have become one with Him. There cannot be any doubt about it. The thinker and the thought become one. To continuously think of Him means to be rid of the ego-sense. The sloka "Ananyaschintayantomam . . ." means that we should accept Him completely and entertain no other thought. This exclusive thought of God grants one always great joy. Such a one deserves to attain Him and gets Him."

How simple, direct and true !

*

*

*

To end with a paeon Indira composed on him a song we sang in chorus to him and Mother Krishnabai when they were our guests at Poona. (See pp. 527-28 in the *Gospel*).

We bow to thee, O Ramdas, O saint, we bow to thee :

O Rama's child whose love outpetals in light and harmony !

Thou com'st to bless our arid earth with His Name's rain of Grace.

And chantest : "Ram ! I'll sing and sing of Thee in gratefulness."

Who's a king and who's bondsman, a lonely alien, say ?

Behold with the eye of love : in friend and foe He comes to play :

On land and sea 'tis He who reigns : all live by His breath of Grace :

And so, O Ram, I sing Thy glory in deep gratefulness :

Touching thy feet the earth is blessed, O Ram's darling son !

Blessed Krishnabai and those who've seen in you the One,

And known that through you on our earth comes Ram to rain His Grace :

So, we will sing His glory and thine in fervent gratefulness."*

I must add a tribute to Mata Krishnabai composed by Indira, because Swami Ramdas is not complete without her, his disciple and colleague for so many decades, and who is still carrying on Papa's work in spite of her frail health. She lived for Papa and her whole being still moves in him and him alone :

*Translated from Indira Devi's Hindi song by D.K.R.

MOTHER, I BOW TO YOU

Mother, I bow to you.

I do not know whether you are the Divine Mother :

But that all orphaned hearts feel the love of the mother in you— I know.

Mother, I bow to you. . . .

(See pp. 462-63 in the GOSPEL)

Bombay :

31st January 1979

DILIP KUMAR ROY

A FEW WORDS

By chance or choice, many may see saints and listen to their inspired talks. But it is given only to a chosen few to cast in their lot with the saints, serve them with all their mind and heart and understand the rhythm of their lives.

Swami Satchidananda had the rare privilege of living in close contact with the two revered saints, Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai, endearingly called 'Papa' and 'Mataji' by their devotees the world over. He has been with them for nearly three decades. He accompanied them on their tours in India and abroad. His joy of having seen them converse with other men of God, do many things for their dear devotees, tackle the problems of day-to-day life and react to certain pleasant or apparently unpleasant situations was too great to be kept to himself. It impelled him to record a few of the events and conversations so that others might get glimpses of the personal side of the saints' lives.

In *The Gospel of Swami Ramdas* Swami Satchidananda has presented some incidents and conversations of Papa and Mataji. In setting down the incidents and the conversations, undue importance is not given to any particular incident or conversation. No relevant detail has been withheld deliberately. He has tried earnestly to give a factual account of the great Master's conversations. He has not let his own views and ideas obtrude into or otherwise colour it. The bare details have been put down without any bias, and only with the aim that the lives of saints should be an open book for all to read. He feels that an unembroidered account may enable earnest aspirants to understand properly the thoughts and actions of the saints which are of the highest excellence and profoundest significance. Saints live, move and act like others to all intents and purposes, but the difference is only in their vision of life and its purpose. While an ordinary person thinks that he is someone in particular and works impelled by self-interest, for power and pelf, for name and fame, a saint acts spontaneously as the Divine urges him, for the good of humanity. His unbounded love flows out to everybody without stint. Through his words and deeds, he spreads sweetness and light. Having realized that he is ever one with the Supreme being who is absolute Existence, whose form is the entire universe and who is at the same time beyond all names and forms, he embraces every created being with his arms of love. He stands in relation to God as a child does to its parent or a servant to his master.

He plays the role God assigns to him in the Cosmic game, ever dwelling in bliss ineffable. *The Gospel* shows how the saints live a perfectly normal life while bathed all the time in the bliss and peace of the Eternal.

The incidents and the conversations were recorded from memory, on the days of their occurrence, by Swami Satchidananda, referred to as S. in the text. Since then many years have rolled by. Even at this distance of time, the account possesses a freshness and charm all its own for those who can enter into the spirit of it. Papa had looked into the original record and made minor corrections in it. Mataji has also set the seal of approval on the record. By virtue of this *The Gospel* acquires a new special interest.

001 May *The Gospel* be found interesting and instructive and may it help the readers understand saints who are the salt of the earth !

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Anandashram

U. S. RAMACHANDRAN

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SWAMI RAMDAS

Sri Swami Ramdas, who was known in his pre-sannyas life as Vittal Rao, was born at Hosdrug, Kanhangad, North Kerala, on Thursday, the 10th April, 1884. It was a day of the full moon and it happened to be Hanuman Jayanthi, i. e., the birthday of Hanuman, the greatest devotee of Sri Rama. This happy synchronization seemed to augur very well for the great future of the child born that day to Srimati Lalita Bai and Sri Balakrishna Rao. The one remarkable thing about him, that people who saw him then observed, was the extraordinary lustre of his eyes.

Vittal was not overfond of school or books, and so he came in for a large measure of his teacher's wrath. He often played truant, but in vain did he hide himself in the bathroom or in the loft of the cow-pen, for his ubiquitous teacher was well aware of the favourite haunts of his recalcitrant pupil. His High School career too was marked by extreme indifference to studies and supreme dislike of text-books. Although he refused to be cramped by the school curriculum, he became a voracious reader and read all the books of general interest he could lay his hands upon. His taste for literature enabled him to acquire even at so early an age a remarkable facility in his English style. His intelligence even as a student was of a high order. Whatever he read once he made his own. He was even then a good conversationalist and had inherited from his father an unequalled sense of wit and humour. He would raise roars of laughter in his listeners by the unique manner in which he related incidents from his own life or observations. The humour always lay more in the narrative of an event than in the event itself and he knew it. Whatever be the situation he was placed in for the time being, it was the lighter side of it rather than the serious one that appealed to his keen sense of the comic and the ludicrous in life.

As could be expected, Vittal lagged behind in his studies with the result that he could not get through the Matriculation examination. He then joined the school of Arts and took a course in drawing and engraving. Though his progress here was remarkable, as the future prospects that this course held out were none too bright, he discontinued the course and joined the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute of Bombay and took up the Textile Engineering course. At the end of the three years' course at the V.J.T. Institute, Vittal Rao received his diploma in Textile manufacture.

When he was employed as Spinning Master in a cotton mill at Gulbarga, he was married to Rukmabai in the year 1908 and a daughter, Ramabai, was born to him in 1913.

After a chequered career of several years he finally came down to Mangalore in 1917 and joined his father-in-law in his business. It went against his grain to stoop to any of the 'tricks of the trade.' Inevitably this led to a clash with his father-in-law and he soon severed his connection with the business and started his own business in dyeing fabrics and printing sarees. But he was too honest to be a businessman and the financial condition of the business was drifting from bad to worse. His domestic life also was none too happy.

Throughout his life in service, brief periods of employment were followed by longer periods of unemployment and idleness. Before he had hardly settled down at one place depending upon the appointment he had secured, circumstances so seemed to work up that he lost the post for no fault of his and he had once again to embark on the quest of securing some fresh means of livelihood. Thus, for him, continued domestic felicity was not to be ; and the sweet pleasures of a home of his own were denied to him.

Slowly and imperceptibly external circumstances were helping Vittal Rao's spirit of dispassion gain an added strength and impetus. Every evening he spent an hour at the house of his brother, Sitaram Rao, whose children would be engaged in Bhajan before the image of Sri Krishna. During the Bhajan, Vittal Rao would lose himself in a blissful state of self-forgetfulness. It was at this time Vittal Rao started chanting the Lord's name 'Ram' and the repetition of the name brought him great mental peace and joy. He kept up a ceaseless flow of the blessed name on his tongue and its humming would automatically issue from his lips even when he was at work or was walking in the streets. He gave up the night meal and other petty comforts of the body. His wife got thoroughly frightened at the strange turn her husband's life was rapidly taking now. No persuasion, appeal and protest either from her or from his child could induce him to alter the course he was now made to follow. Because he felt very strongly that he was set upon this path by that Highest Power which he was struggling to attain and realise.

At this stage his father came to him one day and gave him initiation of the holy mantra, "Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram", assuring him at the same time that if he repeated the mantra constantly, he would be blessed with eternal happiness. This was a great moment in the life of Vittal Rao. His progress from then was quicker and so was his detachment from the world. He was preparing himself for the final plunge.

Very soon (in December 1922) he bade good-bye to his worldly life and left Mangalore. Two days later he reached Srirangam. There, after bath in the holy Cauvery, he changed his clothes to ochre, took the vows of Sannyas and assumed the name 'Ramdas' (servant of Ram) as commanded by his Master Ram. Shortly afterwards he was standing in front of Sri Ramana Maharshi praying for grace. Bhagwan nodded his head as if to say that he had showered his grace on this earnest aspirant.

Now the new Swami Ramdas's whole body trembled with emotion. On leaving the Maharshi he went to a cave in the Arunachala Hill and spent twenty days in constant chanting of Ram Nam, taking only a little rice which he himself had cooked. At the end of this period he was blessed with a new vision. He saw his beloved Ram everywhere. In that ecstasy he embraced anything and anybody he saw. He was literally God-mad. In that condition he travelled all over India visiting holy shrines and Mahatmas. A year later his wife and daughter, coming to know that he was staying in the ashram of Sri Siddharudha Swami at Hubli, went there and with permission of Sri Siddharudha Swami took him back to Mangalore. But Swami Ramdas instead of accompanying the mother and daughter to their house went straight to the Panch Pandav Cave at Kadri. He stayed there for over three months. The stay was very significant in that it afforded Swami Ramdas opportunity for undisturbed meditation and enabled him to get higher experiences. According to him, he first entered the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi while he was in the Panch Pandav Cave.

Again his wanderings took him many times to all parts of India and he had a large number of admirers and followers. Vivid descriptions of his itinerary as a mendicant have been written down by him in his own lucid style and published as *In Quest of God* and *In the Vision of God*.

After a few years' wanderings he again came back to Kasaragod and started a small ashram. It was here that Mother Krishnabai first came into contact with him and after a couple of years chose to dedicate her entire life to the service of Swami Ramdas and his mission.

It was God's will that Swami Ramdas was not to continue in that little ashram long. God prompted some miscreants to create trouble which made Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai, submitting to His will, leave the ashram for good. Soon after, the Anandashram in Kanhangad came up and the opening ceremony of it was done on the 15th May, 1931. Though it was started in a very humble way, the ashram has considerably expanded over the years. Anandashram has been a very powerful spiritual beacon and thousands of ardent devotees have been visiting it every year, carrying home with them the torch of light, love and service lit at the feet of the Great Master.

Swami Ramdas, whom his devotees and followers lovingly called Papa, was bubbling with joy always as the result of his realisation of God in all His aspects and the consequent opening of the floodgates of joy in his heart. He reached the heights of realisation only by taking to the chanting of the Mantra "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram" ('OM' was added by him after he got initiation of the Mantra). This constant chanting of the Mantra enabled him to remember and feel the presence of God within him and everywhere about him, to realise that the entire universe was the form of God. This naturally brought him to the absolute state of surrender, i.e., accepting

that whatever happened, happened by the will of God and he finally realised his oneness with the Supreme Being. He, therefore, taught everybody who sought advice from him to take to the chanting of God's name constantly and submit to His will in all matters. This practice, he assured, would bring them eternal happiness. And they had no reason to doubt the authenticity of this statement because he himself was a living example of what spiritual heights Ram Nam could take an aspirant to.

Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai visited many places in India at the invitation of devotees every year from 1949 to 1957. Wherever he went, Bhajan with the chanting of God's name was the main feature. He was not inclined to give long lectures though he gave short talks and answered any number of questions that were put to him on spiritual subjects. In 1954 he undertook a tour around the world where many friends from the European countries, America, Japan, Malaya, Singapore and Ceylon had the rare opportunity of meeting him and conversing with him. He wrote many books in English and started in 1933 a monthly called *The Vision* to carry his message of Universal Love and Service based on cosmic vision.

The universality and largeness of his outlook can be seen from one of his frequent utterances, quoted below :

"Ramdas does not belong to any particular creed. He firmly believes that all creeds, faiths and religions are different paths which ultimately converge at the same goal. The very sight of a Mohammedan reminds him of Mohammed ; of a Christian, Jesus Christ ; of a Hindu, Rama, Krishna or Shiva; of a Buddhist, Buddha ; of a Parsee, Zoroaster. All the great teachers of the world are from one God—the first eternal cause of all existence. Whether it be in *the Gita* or *the Bible* or *the Koran* or *the Zend Avesta*, we find the same note insistently ringing, viz., self-surrender is the supreme way to liberation or salvation."

Swami Ramdas entered Mahasamadhi on the 25th July 1963 at the age of 79. Though not present in the flesh, he continues to inspire and guide his spiritual children and earnest aspirants wherever they are and his work divine goes on.

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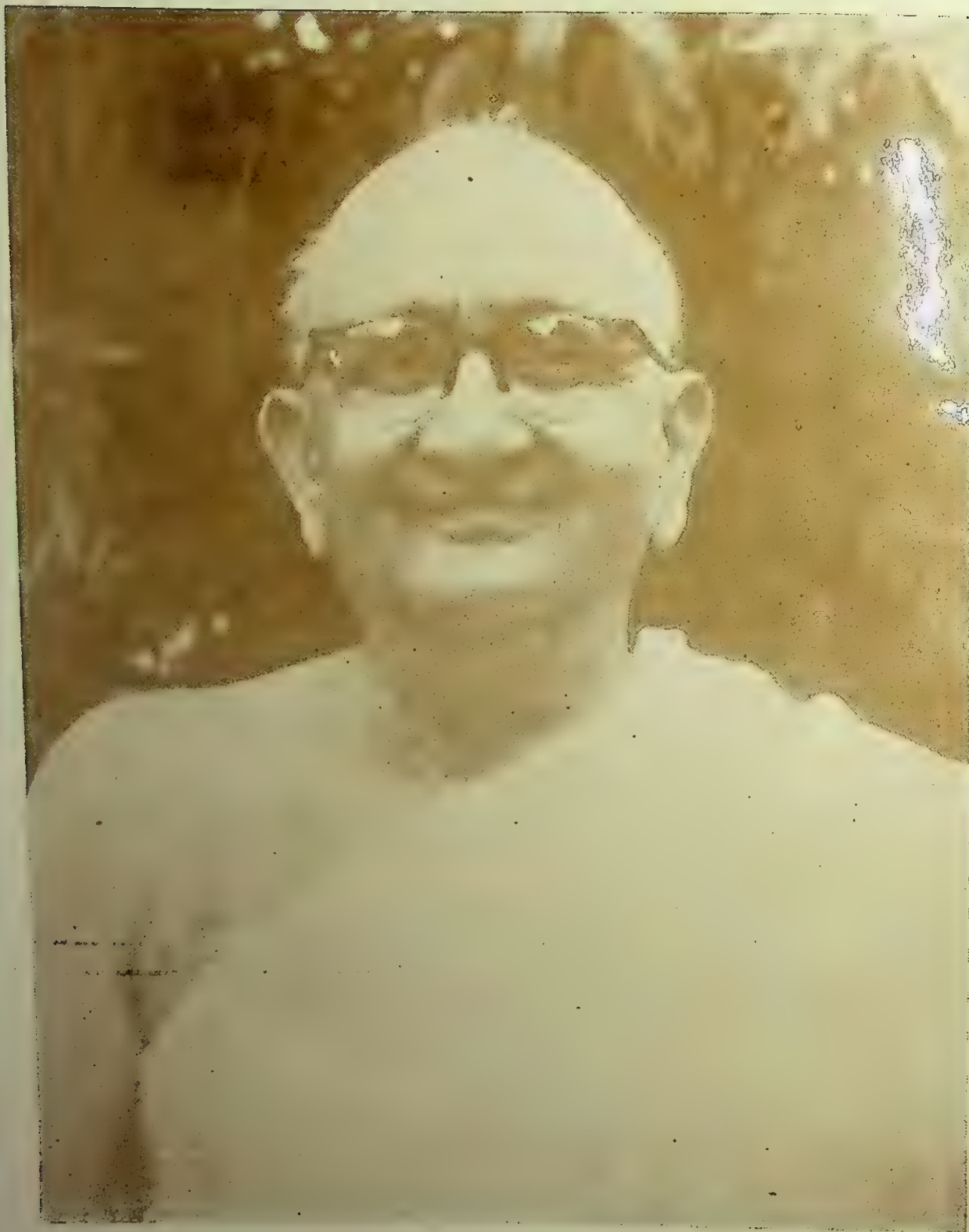
Om Sri Ram jai Ram. jai jai Ram

Let your heart be ever
filled with the sweetness
of Rammam.

All joy and peace to
you.

Hearty Blessings

Ramdas
23. 4. 57



BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

I

Anandashram, August 6, 1951

1. It was about 9-30 a.m. Papa was in the bhajan-hall along with
Love— S. and Iqbalnath Bakhshi. S. brought in a bottle of medicated oil
Human and for massaging Papa's knee-joints which had developed rheumatic
Divine pain. Papa sat on a low bench. Iqbalnath and S. started massaging.

Tarabai's children, Umesh and Uma, came to the hall. Uma was four and Umesh two years old. Papa asked Umesh about his mother who was suffering from typhoid. Umesh prattled something in his peculiar language which Papa took to mean that his mother was sleeping. Uma was looking after her younger brother with great care as a grandmother would. Noticing Uma's love for Umesh, S. remarked, "How loving the children are now! But as they grow up, they begin to lose their love and when they have their own separate families to look after, they may fail even to keep up their relationship as brother and sister."

Papa : "Human love is like that. The object of such love goes on changing. Human love belongs to an ordinary plane. The truth is that everybody stands severely alone in this world. We come alone and we go alone. Viewed from the plane of the highest Reality, this human love, nay, even universal love, belongs to a much lower plane. We have to rise above all these which pertain to the plane of the mind."

Papa then referred to a poem he had written many years ago. S. got up and brought the book of poems and handed it over to Papa, who then read out the poem :

In the infinite silence of the soul everything is naught ;
It is beyond the utmost depths of the mind ;
It is eternal rest, repose and peace.
The loftiest, the sweetest love stands
Aghast before that august Presence ;
Even it has no entry in that mysterious realm
What then is mind ?—what then is love ?
Mind is movement in darkness,
Love is movement in light.

But the great Truth is beyond both—
It transcends thought, name, form, movement,
Change, time, space, causation.
One sole Reality—one sole Existence,
One supreme, colourless, attributeless, unthinkable Truth.

Continuing, Papa said, "This poem is about the highest experience before which even the loftiest love stands aghast. Very few people can understand the meaning of this poem unless it is explained to them. They may even then understand it only to the extent they have experienced."

2. It was 12 noon. Papa was about to retire for his midday rest.
Transcend In the hall were Motiben, Natverlal Shah and S. Papa soon after
Himsa and went to bed. Motiben and S. started massaging gently his body
Ahimsa while Natverlal was fanning him.

Papa : "Last night the rats were doing a lot of mischief. They were running about on the ceiling, making much noise ; they also came down and started biting Mataji's and Ramkishor's feet. We must get a rat-trap to catch these rats."

After a pause, Papa continued, "What shall we do after catching the rats ? We may not kill them. If we take them to some distant place and leave them there we will be causing trouble to the people close by. If we do not catch them at all, how are we to live here ? In course of time, we may have to leave the ashram in charge of the rats and go away to Benares or some other place."

S : "Then what is the solution ?"

Papa : "What is the solution ? Find out."

All kept silent. After a few minutes, Papa said, "If we have to carry on in this world, we have to deal with many such problems. Running away from them, saying that this is sin and that is sin, is not correct. Absolute ahimsa is not practicable in this worldly life. The solution lies in going beyond the pairs of opposites and getting rid of the sense of doership and non-doership. We should realise that God is everything. The rat is God ; and the people whom the rats trouble after we leave them at a distance are also God. Thus everything is God. Then who is to be affected by what ?"

After the evening bhajan a number of devotees were sitting in front of Papa. Gopal was making Papa's bed. By the evening post, Papa had received a copy of *Gita Meditations* by Sri T. L. Vaswani. Papa was having the book in his hand.

Addressing those in front of him, he said, "It is wrong to say that *the Gita* teaches absolute ahimsa or non-violence. *The Gita*, in fact, permits war and violence. Sri Krishna asked Arjuna to kill all his opponents, even though they happened to be his close relations, friends, teachers and so on. *The Gita* teaches us to do all actions in the world, whether violent or non-violent, with absolute detachment. That is the teaching. The stress is on detachment. The work should be done in a spirit of dedication to God. Work will never bind the knower of Reality who is completely detached in his actions."

Papa continued : "Absolute ahimsa is not possible when we are engaged in activities in the world. For a spiritual aspirant, non-violence, as a sadhana, is all right. For realising God, one has to develop suddhasatva. This is possible only by the practice of total ahimsa, among many other disciplines. But in the last stage, the sadhaka has to go beyond that too before he reaches his ultimate goal."

August 8, 1951

3. It was about 7 a.m. Papa who was in the bhajan-hall sent for S.
Faith in S. found Papa waiting for him with a letter in hand. Papa told S :
Blessings "We have to send a Telegraphic Money Order for five rupees to a devotee. She wants Ramdas to send this money for inclusion in her son's Medical College fees (first fee) so that he may successfully get through the college course. She has also sent a rupee note which she wants Ramdas to touch and return to her. She will use this rupee for the purchase of her son's books."

Saying these words Papa laughed and continued : "Hers is no ordinary faith. She wants to get everything done by blessings alone. The only thing she could not do was to bring back her departed husband's life. About that too, she now regrets she did not wire to Ramdas for blessings when her husband's illness was serious. Even now she feels for what she considers to be her mistake. Faith carries her smoothly through all crises in life." S. then left for the office to arrange for the T.M.O. to be sent.

After correspondence was over, Iqbalnath and S. were giving massage to Papa's knee-joints with oil. Papa then took out a letter from his pocket and read it out. It was from a devotee in Bombay asking for blessings for one or two things. After reading the letter he observed : "People ask for blessings from the time the child is in its mother's womb for its safe delivery ; then for his birthday, upanayanam, promotion in school, marriage, recovery from diseases, appointment and so on. Then in due course, blessings are similarly wanted for the son's child. And even after his death, the son asks for blessings so that his father's soul may rest in peace. You can imagine how many blessings they ask for !"

4.
**Self—
adulation,
a Vice**

In that letter there was also a reference to a particular sadhaka. Iqbalnath wanted to know when the sadhaka first came in touch with the ashram. Papa said, "Oh, he has been known to Ramdas for many years. When he came here for the first time he was a first-class dandy, putting on fine dress, hair oiled and combed, and a tilak on his forehead. In this dress he used to sit for bhajan. Once he told Ramdas that he was a spiritual aspirant. Then Ramdas replied: 'Nothing doing! How can a sadhaka lead such a fashionable life, spending two or three hours daily on his toilet?' After this he got the hair on his head closely cut and made his dress also much simpler. He is a great lover of saints and he is after satsang. Ramdas feels he has been leading a pure life. He has no vices except self-adulation. Of course, self-adulation is one of the worst vices."

Vaidyanathan, a visitor from Jaffna, who had been staying for some days in the ashram and was returning to his place, came to the bhajan-hall to take his leave of Papa. After prostrating before Papa, he asked, "Papa, please bless me."

Papa replied: "You need not specially ask for blessings. When you go to a saint, his blessings are with you. Write to us sometime after reaching your place."

After the evening bhajan, at 8-15 p.m., Dr. R. Kuppuswamy, in charge of the Anandashram Free Hospital, came and reported to Papa that a sadhu who was being treated for rheumatism had moved from the room allotted to him to the common dharmashala. Papa told the doctor: "Ramdas knew it. Who is there now to look after him? He has been fighting with Mohideen who was attending on him. He even went to the length of beating the latter. These sadhus are still very orthodox. They cannot mix freely with harijans, muslims and others. We have nobody else but Mohideen to attend on this sadhu. Let Mataji decide the matter."

5.
**Milk,
the best
Diet**

It was 9-30 p.m. S. took a glass of salt water to Papa for gargling. Papa took the glass and said laughing: "Oh, Ramdas did not remember this salt-water business. He remembered only the sugarcandy." S: "Yes, Papa, I shall bring sugarcandy after the salt-water gargle."

Papa: "That is very consoling."

Motiben: "Nobody can get on without salt. We want salt to be added to every vegetable preparation."

Papa : "That is our own making. In fact, there is a certain percentage of salt in every vegetable. But we want to add more salt that we may have better taste and eat more. For a sadhaka, saltless diet is very good. Of course, milk diet is the best. When one is on milk diet his mind is very bright—as bright as burnished gold ; but he should also repeat Ramnam and do meditation. Now Ramdas must go to bed."

August 9, 1951

6. 8-30 a.m. After attending to the day's correspondence, Papa was
No Ill-Will pacing up and down the bhajan-hall. He told S. who was by his side : "The headmaster of Sri Krishna Vidyalaya has asked Ramdas for a strictly private interview this evening in the Vidyalaya hall upstairs. He expressed to Ramdas yesterday that he felt his going away, incurring the displeasure of Ramdas, was not good for him. Ramdas has absolutely no ill-will towards anybody. He will make this clear to the headmaster."

Next, Papa and S. went to see the hospital ward building which had just been completed. While returning, Dr. Kuppaswami said that Mataji was unwell, feeling giddy. Then Papa, S. and the doctor went straight to the room in the building behind the bhajan-hall, where Mataji was lying down with a wet kerchief on her forehead. Papa asked her what the matter was. She replied she felt slight giddiness and would be all right soon.

Papa : "The trouble is that you are not taking any rest at all. All through the day you are engaged in work and nowadays you have given up even your one-hour rest in the afternoon. That is why you are not keeping well."

Mataji (*smiling*) : "I am not doing any work."

Papa : "Then, why can't you rest and sleep a short while in the afternoon? Now at least you should take complete rest."

7. From there Papa went to the bhajan-hall. S. and Iqbalnath began
Unkempt in to massage Papa's knees with oil, while the talk went on about
Sadhana Iqbalnath's admission to the Engineering College in Bangalore.
Days

Papa said : "Ramdas wrote to K.C.R. only to remind him about your talk with him, lest he should forget it amidst his many worries. Everybody has worries. Do not think that big people have no worries. They have big worries. Why, even sannyasins have worries. They may have only trifling worries, but having nothing else to think of, they magnify them."

At ten o'clock Papa again went to Mataji's room and asked her not to disturb herself for the sake of his bath, which she usually attended to. He said, "Kindly give Ramdas freedom today. Ramdas will manage it himself. He does not like anyone else to help him in his bath." Addressing S. he continued: "Mataji started giving bath to Ramdas when he was ill for a long time, and she continues it as she finds joy in it."

Mataji: "Papa was not allowing anyone even to touch his body while bathing. When he had rheumatism and was unable to freely raise his hands to reach his back, I began to help him. If he is allowed to take bath unaided, he may not bathe his back and body properly."

Papa: "In those days Ramdas had to allow Mataji to give him bath, but he is not going to allow anyone else to do so."

Papa went for his bath alone and then went for bhajan after a few words with Mataji. Mataji told S: "Papa took fifteen minutes for his bath today. He said he took his bath properly because he remembered me. See how careless he is about his body! During his sadhana days, he even had lice on his head and body. He never cared to shave or wash properly, except when forced by friends."

8. After Papa's lunch, before his afternoon rest, Motiben, Natverlal
Tapasvins Shah and S. were with him. He read a few pages from the book
alone have *Lava and Kusa* in Hindi. When the clock struck twelve, he closed
Creative the book and said: "How nicely sage Valmiki has narrated the
Genius story! What wonderful brains these great rishis had! Whether
 we accept their works as historical or not, we have to appreciate
their genius which gave us great works like *the Ramayana* and *the Mahabharata*.
Tapasvins alone have such creative genius and capacity. What they produced have
been a source of inspiration for ages past and will continue to be so for ages to
come. The works of mere intellectuals, however great, last for a short time and then
become stale. These rishis were spiritually inspired poets. They composed their
works in a state of spiritual ecstasy. The intellectuals without any spiritual
experience cannot find enjoyment in their work as much as the rishis do, who are
ever in tune with the Eternal, and create great works which express their inner
ecstasy and experience."

9. For an hour in the afternoon, Papa read a few pages from *the*
Inaction *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. Closing the book, Papa observed: "Sri
in Ramakrishna never liked anyone criticising another, as in doing so
Action there is the danger of straying away from Truth."

S. reported that Mataji's giddiness continued and that she had not had any food.

Papa : "Ramdas has been repeatedly asking her to take sufficient rest daily. But she finds no time for rest. When further pressed, she would say, 'I am not doing anything at all. Work is all done by others.' Though she is working long hours, she says she never does anything ! That is real inaction in action. She acts and at the same time feels she acts not. Siddhas say that they never work, though they are seen engaged in ceaseless activity. Bhagavan Vyasa drank a potful of curds and standing on the bank of the Jamuna, said, 'If I am a nitya-upavasi—one who is ever fasting—may the river Jamuna make way for me. Instantly, the waters parted and a clear passage was seen across the river. Such is the secret of inaction in action. When you are established in the Cosmic Consciousness, in the Atman, you are not affected by your activities in the sphere of prakriti."

10. After the night bhajan, when devotees were sitting in front of
The Marks of Papa, S. reminded him of the question raised in the afternoon on
A the signs of a jivanmukta.
Jivanmukta

Papa : "Yes, this is a point worthy of consideration. How can you make out if one is a jivanmukta or not? He may be engaged in worldly activities as any other man, eating like any other man and doing many things as ordinary people. Take for example the case of Ramdas himself. How can any of you say he is a self-realised soul?"

All remained silent for a while.

S : "I feel it can be done only by intuition. One might be able to find a lot of difference between Papa and an ordinary man by long and close observation also."

Papa asked Natverlal Shah : "What do you say?"

Natverlal : "S. has moved with Papa for a longer time. He might have observed something special."

Papa : "You have also been with Ramdas for a long time. What have you observed?"

Natverlal kept quiet, when S. remarked : "The wise man keeps quiet."

Then Papa himself came out with the answer : "It is not possible to say one is a jivanmukta or not from his external appearance and actions. The qualities of a

jivanmukta, as described in the scriptures are—he is conscious of his immortality : he has conquered fear ; his senses are under control ; he is ever in tune with the Infinite ; he has Sama-drishti—equal vision ; he is ever immersed in bliss.

“As these signs refer only to the internal state, how is it possible to know a jivanmukta from merely external signs ? It is not possible. But by the inner joy and peace one gets in the presence of a jivanmukta, one feels intuitively that he is such a saint. One does not get inner joy when one is in the presence of worldly people or moves with them. The only reliable sign of a jivanmukta—that too seen only in rare cases—is that he has a certain extraordinary personal charm, which draws people to him in thousands. When people flock to a person in thousands and also go to him often, we can be sure that God has manifested in him in a special degree more than in others. Of course, there are many jivanmuktas who are not at all known to people. They do not wish to be known and so remain obscure.”

S. here mentioned how Janakinath Bakhshi, the Kashmir friend, became Papa's devotee the instant he met Papa.

Papa : “Then Ramdas had put on ochre robes.”

S : “But there were so many with ochre robes on. Why did he pick out only Papa ?”

Papa then narrated how he came into contact with Janakinath Bakhshi, and his trip to Amarnath.

August 10, 1951

11. **Strictness in Sadhana** It was about 9-30 a.m. Papa had just returned to the bhajan-hall after spending a few minutes with Mataji in the room where she was lying down, still unwell. S. brought the bottle of oil and asked Papa to sit on the low stool so that Iqbalnath and he might massage his legs. Considering that massage was no longer absolutely necessary, as he was almost free from the rheumatic pain, and not liking much the idea of sitting quiet while the legs were massaged, Papa asked S : “This massage business has become a routine. Is it not time to stop this ?”

S : “This being the rainy season, it would be better if the massage is continued as a precautionary measure.”

Papa then reluctantly agreed.

While massaging, S. started talking about sadhana. In reply to one of his questions Papa said : “When a sadhaka advances on the spiritual path, and his mind gets purified, satvaguna becomes predominant in him. Then he sees visions

of light and forms. Even when he closes his eyes, he will be seeing sparks of light, light like that of the moon, and so on. These signs indicate that he is in satvaguna. But he does not stay long in that state. He has to be very, very careful at this time as a fall back to rajas and tamas is easy. Slackness in sadhana, bad company or impure food may cause the fall. After reaching the state, in which satvaguna is dominant, he must go beyond the gunas. If he is intense, persevering and sincere in his sadhana, he will definitely rise to the higher stage. Strict self-discipline is absolutely necessary. Ramdas was very particular about his food and sleep when he was passing through such a stage. He wanted to control sleep and for that he had to control food. He was for a long time living only on boiled potatoes and milk. Even milk he gave up later. The stomach used to burn with hunger as also the whole body. His sister, Lakshmi Devi, one day brought some sweets she had made and requested Ramdas to take them. Ramdas firmly refused saying, 'No, Ramdas won't give in till his goal is attained.' Once he even refused to take the bread offered by Gurudev. So strict was his discipline. When he made a vow, nobody could make him break it until he got a command from within to do so."

In the afternoon, Papa read as usual from *the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* to a few ashramites. At the close of the reading, Dr. Kuppuswami came and requested Papa to go over to his house for coffee, as it was the day of Varalakshmi pooja. The doctor invited others also who were sitting in the bhajan-hall. The doctor's wife was full of love and devotion. As soon as Papa entered the house, she prostrated at Papa's feet and took him to the pooja room which was nicely decorated with flowers and green leaves. Papa felt happy to see how the Universal Mother was worshipped. He came out and sat on a chair in another room. Seeing the house clean and tidy, Papa observed : "The arrangement and neatness in the house show that there are no children here. That is why everything is in its right place." The doctor and his wife had not so far had a child. Papa was given a cup of coffee after drinking which he watched others taking prasad consisting of various sweets.

<p>12.</p> <p>Corruption even in Ashrams</p>	<p>It was evening and Papa went on his usual rounds. S. was with him. After visiting the Vidyalaya and Udyog Shala, Papa was going towards the new hospital building. On the way he observed : "Corruption has become nowadays so common that it threatens to enter even our institutions."</p>
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S. was surprised to hear these remarks.

Papa continued : "Mataji often says that it was a mistake to have started these institutions. Of course, we started these placing lofty ideals before ourselves, but unfortunately some of the workers do not co-operate, or even care to understand the ideals."

The evening post brought a photograph of Mother Anasuya Devi of Jharia. Papa and Mataji had visited her house in Jharia during their tour that year. The picture of the pious mother, taken when she was in a state of ecstatic trance, brought back to Papa all the memories of the visit, the loving welcome she gave him and Mataji and her devout, loving, and childlike nature. After the bhajan was over, he showed the picture with great joy to all those present in the hall, talking to them about his visit to her house.

It was nearing ten o' clock and Papa was about to retire when Mataji came up to the bhajan-hall. She was feeling slightly better and looked it. She sat near Papa's cot. He talked with her for a few minutes about his visit to Dr. Kuppuswami's house and the pooja arrangements there.

II

Anandashram, August 11, 1951

13. **Life stale without problems** 6 a.m. Papa had just got up. Mataji was still in bed. When she was asked about her health, she said she was feeling better. Papa's throat was bad as he had a cold. So it was suggested that Papa should reduce talking to the minimum. Mataji said that Papa's afternoon reading should be stopped.

The doctor gave a throat paint to Papa some time later. In his talks with the doctor, Papa again returned to the topic of corruption and observed : "There are so many problems in the ashram, cropping up every day. Of course, if there are no problems, life will be very drab. There is joy only when there are problems and when they are tackled properly. God is responsible for everything and if we ask Him why He makes some people resort to corrupt practices, do you know what He will say? That He Himself is playing the whole game of this universe ; He puts on the parts of a thief, a good man, a criminal, a sadhu and so on."

14. **God plays all Roles** S : "Yes, Papa, but when He Himself is putting on different masks and acting in the various roles in the world-drama, the description that He is all-compassionate, etc., seems to have no meaning. To whom has He then got to show mercy and compassion ? To Himself ?"

Papa : "To complete the whole game all these varieties are necessary. When He is putting on different roles, He has naturally to act accordingly. What He does is this. When He wants to play the part of a miserable or vicious person, He goes about telling lies, harms others and practises all sorts of vices. When He wants to play the role of a good and saintly man, He leads a virtuous life, does good to others, practises kindness and compassion, performs austerities and shows that by such practices the individual purifies himself and realises his true nature. Having assumed different masks, He plays in various ways and pretends to be different from Himself. As such, He really prays to Himself and He shows mercy and compassion to Himself in other forms. Everything belongs to His world-play."

9-45 p.m. It was Papa's bedtime. He remarked, lying down : "Ramdas feels healthier when his food is adjusted in such a way that he is always a little

hungry. When food is taken even slightly in excess, it becomes troublesome. We should have only five per cent consciousness of our body. Ninetyfive per cent we should be above body-consciousness. When the stomach is very light and the mind is contemplative, this is possible."

S : "Instead of five per cent body-consciousness, we are now having one hundred and five per cent."

Papa laughed.

August 12, 1951

15. Mataji was much better in the morning, although weak.

**Mataji never
Half-hearted** After dictating replies to the letters that had been pending for some days, Papa went to the room where Mataji was resting. He had in his hand the latest issue of *The Hindu* wherein there was an article on paddy cultivation explaining how a farmer in Salem district had raised a record crop. As Mataji was in charge of the cultivation of the ashram fields, Papa gave her an account of that Salem farmer's achievement for comparison with the yield in the ashram fields. Mataji observed that there was still great scope for improvement in the agricultural activities of the ashram, though the results then obtained matched with those in the areas nearby.

Mataji was keenly interested in agriculture. She was thorough in everything she did. There was no half-heartedness in any work she undertook. She might oppose the expansion of ashram activities in any particular line and not approve the starting of a new work. But once Papa decided on doing anything even in the face of her strong opposition, she gave him her whole-hearted co-operation and saw to it that the work was carried out successfully. So complete was her surrender to him.

Sitting in the veranda of the building behind the bhajan-hall, Papa was shaving himself. Keshav Bhat, the ashram mechanic, came running with joy and reported the arrival from Salem of Soundararaja Mudaliar, an engineer, to whom a telegram was sent requesting him to come immediately to repair the ashram oil engine which had gone out of order recently. In a few minutes Mudaliar himself came to Papa and made pranams. Papa greeted him with a broad smile, and gave him a brief account of the engine trouble and said, "Now go and have your tiffin. See the joy of Keshav at the very sight of you. He is jumping as if his God has given him darshan. Poor fellow, he has been worrying himself all these days over the engine."

Shortly afterwards an ashram worker brought before Papa a basket containing rice of a very fine quality brought by Soundararaja Mudaliar. Seeing the rice,

Papa asked Mataji to prepare keshar-bhath. Mataji said it could be done on the 15th, being the Independence Day.

In the afternoon most of Papa's time was spent with Soundararaja Mudaliar in the engine-room. Late in the evening the defect of the engine was found out. Mudaliar then, with great joy, remarked : "Papa, when you asked me to come here last time, I delayed and the result was that I had a lot of trouble with the engine. Therefore, when I left this place then, I had decided that I would respond to Papa's call in future immediately. So, this time I came the moment I received your wire. Now see the result ! The defect has been located soon and now the repair work can be done in no time."

16. 9-45 p.m. Papa's bedtime. To those who were sitting near his cot he spoke about the arrangements for the celebration of the Food aplenty Independence Day at the Vidyalaya. Then S. remarked : "The wife of the Central Food Minister is appealing to all to give up food for one day a week and is herself doing so."

Papa : "Ramdas has now increased his food to thrice daily and if the Food Minister comes to know of it, he may be angry."

Madhukar Shah : "As you are taking food thrice a day, Papa, we are also having food in plenty."

Mataji, who was listening to the conversation, then chimed in : "Papa, if you reduce your food, we all shall have to go starving. Now that you are taking food thrice daily, though in small quantities, food is plenty in the ashram kitchen and we are getting so much wheat that there is not enough room to store it."

Papa : "Is it so ? Anyway, Ramdas is not going to take food more than three times. You can rest assured that this is his maximum."

August 13, 1951

Papa spent most of the day in the engine-room where Mudaliar was trying his best to set the engine right. He had not been successful yet though he was fully confident last night. After seeing Mudaliar working the whole day without success, Papa remarked : "Soundararajan has been tied here without a rope. Poor fellow has a lot of work on hand at his place." S. added : "Yes, he was dragged here by 'wire' and tied down without a rope."

Mataji being in her normal health attended to her work as usual.

17. In the evening Papa went on his usual rounds to Udyog Shala.
Papa's While there, he asked the tailor to stitch a khadi cap for Ramkishor
favourite for use on the Independence Day.

Ramkishor, then nine years of age, was loved very much by Papa and had been his pet ever since he was born in the ashram in 1943. His mother, Motiben, in her helpless condition, was given refuge in the ashram by the all-compassionate Papa and Mataji on the recommendation of her well-wishers. The boy was born a few months later.

In his childhood the boy's life was in danger in many ways. Papa and Mataji had to face very grave situations to provide security to the mother and the child. Papa loved Ramkishor so deeply that he did everything for him and tended him as a mother would her child. Papa would wake Ramkishor up early in the morning and sit with him when he did his lessons and saw to every item of his daily programme with so much exactness and care that it demanded no small amount of patience, and surely none other than Papa could do so. Only Papa could have the patience to answer all the questions put by Ramkishor. They were innumerable, continuous and covered many subjects. Papa gave everything he wanted and made him happy. The boy in turn was very loving and could not live apart from Papa. He could be away from his mother but not from Papa. He was intelligent but also mischievous. He was so far given only private tuition and the tutors found it no easy job to control and teach him. So it was decided to put him in V class in Sri Krishna Vidyalaya conducted by the ashram. Ramkishor would take his meal with Papa, sit with him, and sleep near him. Often Papa remarked about him thus: "This boy Ramkishor is very intelligent. His love for Ramdas is very great. There are signs of greatness in him. His life and Ramdas's life have been so mysteriously and closely linked together that separation is very difficult. Severance is impossible in this life."

18. 8 p.m. Bhajan was just over. The evening post brought many
Divine Love letters which Papa was busy reading for some time. In front of him
Transforms were seated a number of devotees. During the talks that followed,
Papa referred to an incident early in his itinerant life.

He said, "When Ramdas was in Lahore once, he was the guest of Ramchandra Gupta. One day this friend took Ramdas to the house of an advocate. Ramdas waited in the drawing room and Ramchandra Gupta went inside to inform the friend about the arrival of Ramdas. More than ten minutes elapsed before they came out and sat opposite to Ramdas. The advocate's face showed that he did not at all like Ramdas's visit. Soon he started talking against sadhus generally and remarked: These sadhus are going from place to place to serve their own selfish ends. They make money and have disciples only to live in ease and comfort. They go about visiting the houses of devotees so that they may get good and rich food daily."

"Ramdas was listening to these words silently. When the advocate stopped, Ramdas talked for some time on divine love, making absolutely no reference to what the advocate had said so far. Ramdas said that divine love was very powerful. It was above everything else and it was given even in return for hate. The talk went on in this vein for some time. Gupta was naturally very much disturbed over the cold reception given to Ramdas there. But he was not aware of the great transformation that was silently taking place in the heart of his advocate friend as a result of Ramdas's words. Gupta pointed out to Ramdas that it was time to leave, and both got up. The advocate friend also got up, but now quite a changed man. With folded hands he begged of Ramdas to excuse him for what he had said and, to the great surprise of Gupta, also requested that Ramdas should be pleased to accept bhiksha in his house the next day. Ramdas readily accepted the invitation, and was treated with all love and kindness when he went there the next day. Thus, you see, divine love is a great transformer."

August 14, 1951

19. **Difficulties with Sadhakas and Orphans** Mataji often said that the starting of the ashram was a great mistake, and expanding its activities was a still greater mistake. She had many things to look after. In the early days she wished that sincere sadhakas should be given the chance to be with Papa, to have the privilege of serving him and thereby to progress on the spiritual path. Therefore, many were admitted and advised to do some small service and spend the rest of their time in sadhana. But, unfortunately, instead of progressing, they started finding fault with the ashram administration, Mataji and Papa. So, Papa advised them for their own good to leave the ashram. Mataji then resolved not to encourage sadhakas to stay permanently in the ashram.

Mataji was then bringing up some poor orphan children in the ashram. They were looked after by her with great affection. Their requirements were met in every way. They were sent to school or taught by tutors and enjoyed more than average comforts. But the pity of it was that they often proved disobedient even to her, and behaved rudely to others. There was no end to the troubles they sometimes gave her. She would patiently hear complaints about them from many quarters and simply say: "What am I to do? It is very difficult to change one's character formed in early childhood. Look at the boy Chandrasekhar. He was put under the care of the headmaster for proper training. For some time he seemed to be shaping well. Now he is no longer under the control of the headmaster, as he has joined another school. So he has reverted to his bad ways. His tendencies were only repressed for a time when he was with the headmaster, who, it would appear, was given to beating the boy; and now they are coming out again with greater force."

It was 5-30 p.m. Papa was sitting in the open, near the cement benches in front of the bhajan-hall. The weather was fine. S. was near him. The boy

Chandrasekhar came there. Papa called him near and told him: "Look here, Ramdas understands that you are falling back into your old ways. If Ramdas hears complaints about you any more, he will have to send you away. We do not want here boys who are disobedient, who insult others and who make themselves in many ways a nuisance to the ashram. You are also reported to be getting up very late in the mornings. This habit is bad for you. From tomorrow you should get up at six o' clock and write Ramnam till seven. This will make you behave better, as your mind will then be calm."

A few minutes afterwards Ramkishor was seen plucking leaves, causing injury to plants in front of the bhajan-hall. Papa had warned him many times that he should not do so. Papa called him near and admonished him saying: "Ramkishor, you have been warned several times not to hurt plants. You are by that causing great pain to them. If you repeat this again, you will be punished for it."

How kindly Papa took care of, moulded and guided children! Sometimes he advised them, sometimes admonished them, only with a view to freeing them of their bad habits and enabling them to develop good qualities. He watched the children so closely that it needed infinite patience which he alone had.

20. **Misunder-
standing
Cleared** When on a tour of Saurashtra in March that year, Papa and Mataji were about to leave Bhavnagar for Rajkot, a report reached them that some of the devotees of Sri Ranchhoddasji Maharaj of Rajkot, all of whom had warmly received and honoured Papa on the occasion of his visit in 1949, had then (in March 1951) removed the photos of Papa and Mataji from their homes, and a few of them had even left Rajkot to avoid meeting them. Still a few met Papa and Mataji. One among them, Sri J. Jobanputra, Collector of the district of Rajkot, had invited them to his house. In the course of the conversation they were shown the photograph of a saint whom they did not recognise. Sri Jobanputra said that it was the photo of Sri Ranchhoddasji Maharaj, to whom the courtesy due to a saint was reported to have not been extended by Mataji during his stay at Anandashram a few years before, as he was then asked to prepare cakes out of cow-dung. Mataji denied all knowledge of any such incident and added: "I do not remember having ever done so. Even if it be true, I am only his child and the Mahatma could excuse me, treating the ashram as his own. Anyhow, if I had done so, I tender my sincere apologies."

The letter received that day was from Chakkubhai, one of Papa's devotees at Rajkot. Chakkubhai had met Sri Ranchhoddasji Maharaj at Chitrakut where the saint then was. On being informed of the above incident the saint said that he had been at Anandashram for eighteen days some twelve or thirteen years before; that he prepared his own food; that he saw Mataji toil at almost the entire work of the

ashram herself with little assistance ; that he offered to share the work of the goshala and joined others in the making of cow-dung cakes ; that he was sorry for the misunderstanding on the part of his householder devotees of Rajkot ; that he himself was away from Rajkot on both occasions when Papa was in Rajkot in 1949 and 1951 and so could not meet Papa ; that he had a high esteem for Papa whom he considered as an avatar of Sri Rama and that he would himself be writing to Papa to convey his regret at the misunderstanding. Sri Ranchhoddasji Maharaj's letter in similar terms was received the same day. The two letters cleared up the unfortunate misunderstanding, much to the joy and happiness of Papa and Mataji.*

* When Papa and Mataji visited Rajkot in 1952, they were invited by the disciples of Sri Ranchhoddasji Maharaj to their ashram and were treated with all love and devotion

III

Anandashram, August 15, 1951

21. It was 7 a.m. Papa was sitting on his chair in the bhajan-hall near the radio. Some devotees were sitting in front of him. When **Sadhana** S. entered the hall, Papa was holding in his hand the book, **Bhakti and** *Stories of Great Bhaktas* in Hindi. As he opened the book, the **Sadhya** words 'Sadhana Bhakti' and 'Sadhya Bhakti' caught his eyes. In the **Bhakti** course of the talk that followed he observed :

"The devotee at first aspires to realise God. He tries to think of Him always. He repeats His name. For him God is somewhere in the heavens, or in temples, or he meditates on Him as residing in his own heart. Finally, by the intensity of his aspiration and devotion, his mind gradually becomes pure and he gets darshan of God in the form in which he has been conceiving of Him. The devotee realises finally his oneness with Him. Bhakti, up to this stage, can be termed 'sadhana bhakti'.

"Even after this realisation of God, i.e., after having realised his oneness with Him, the devotee still desires to maintain a sort of relationship with God as between mother and child, master and servant, and so on. He subsequently sees his Beloved everywhere. Nothing else exists for him but his Beloved. He is one with the Beloved and at the same time he is also His child, or servant, or friend and loves Him as such. This love of the devotee for his Beloved does not arise out of desire for anything, not even for any spiritual attainment. This is love for love's sake, for the pure joy of love.

"During his period of sadhana the devotee considered his God as different from the universe, and so he rejected the universe as something unreal. Now that he sees the whole universe as the very manifestation of God, his Beloved, there is nothing for him to reject. So this love for God, which persists even after realising His presence everywhere is known as 'sadhya bhakti' or 'parabhakti'.

"Some jnanis do not accept this stage of bhakti. Having realised their oneness with God, they do not go beyond it and see the whole universe as His very manifestation. They consider the world as mere illusion, as non-existent.

“When Ramdas was wandering in ochre robes, whenever he was asked to talk, he talked about bhakti and parabhakti. Some of his sannyasi companions naturally did not subscribe to his views and told Ramdas that his dress, name and talk were inconsistent with each other. He was wearing ochre clothes, but was named simply Ramdas, which was not proper. He should either wear white clothes or change his name to one ending in ‘ananda’ or some other suffix usually adopted by sannyasins. They further asked how, if he were a sannyasi, he could talk about parabhakti. Ramdas replied that Ram gave him the dress, gave him the name and made him talk on parabhakti, and that until He commanded him to change, he would not do so.”

22. The Sri Krishna Vidyalaya students and teachers were celebrating
Contem- the Independence Day. Papa went to the Vidyalaya at 9 a.m.,
plation leads witnessed the flag-hoisting ceremony, watched the distribution of
to Oneness sweets to the children and saw them start on a procession. He
with God— returned to the ashram about 10-30 a.m.
Take Ramnam

In the afternoon, A. Subramania Iyer, Natverlal Shah and S. were with Papa in the bhajan-hall. Subramania Iyer asked Papa to explain a paragraph in *The Vision*, the ashram magazine, relating to silent meditation.

Papa: “Why do you want to discuss all these things? You had better take Ramnam constantly. These articles are for those who do not meet Ramdas often. You are here always and have heard about it so often. Still Ramdas will tell you. When the mind is contemplating God thought waves come one by one and subside in it. In between the merging of one thought wave and the rising of another, there is a period of stillness, a state of complete absence of thought. This is pure consciousness. The aim of the aspirant is to prolong the period of this stillness and ultimately have it always. This perfect stillness is the state of samadhi.

“When you sit still, silent and serene, with all your senses at rest, in the awareness of your divine self, you feel that you are not an individual tied down to the desires of the flesh, but a purified and enlightened being. You feel that you are the infinite, not a finite being. Now you experience your oneness with God—the Absolute Existence. This experience comes to you after you have remained in a state of perfect stillness, which means samadhi. You have now achieved a state which has been yours from time immemorial, but of which you have been ignorant till now.

“Go on repeating Ramnam continuously, without any break. So long as you have desires for worldly objects and sense-enjoyments, or have worries about mundane matters, you cannot achieve this stillness and have real joy. You should completely surrender everything to God first. Leave off your worries and feel light

and free. By proper discrimination between the real and the unreal, give up the desire for worldly enjoyments which are but ephemeral. The more you fill your mind with God, the less will be its desire for sense-pleasures. Bhakti intensifies vairagya. Strenuous effort and regular practice will gradually fill the mind completely with God and there will be no chance for worldly thoughts or desires to enter it. Now you experience immeasurable joy and the moment you utter God's name you go into ecstasy."

Pointing to Sri Ramakrishna's picture on the wall, he continued: "He was often in that state; it is called bhavasamadhi."

Subramania Iyer: "What kind of repetition of God's name is advised, silent or loud?"

Papa: "Silent repetition is of course more efficacious. But it is very difficult where there are external disturbances. It needs perfect solitude. For one who is used to mental repetition of Ramnam, the moment he starts repeating it, the mind becomes perfectly still."

23. After some time Papa went out on his usual evening rounds. On
A Rubbish his return at about 5 o'clock, he saw Sadhu Balaram, who had
Heap— arrived only a few minutes back, waiting for him near the gate.
Mataji's Papa greeted him, loudly exclaiming: "Oh Balaram, you have grown
Reflections stout! How are you? When did you come?"

Balaram fell prostrate at Papa's feet and said: "Papa, I had been to Badri. I am all right."

Papa: "Are you still on diet?"

Balaram: "Yes, Papa."

Papa: "All right, go, have your bath and take some food."

It was about 6 p.m. The dinner-bell had gone. The ashramites and visitors were going one by one to the dining-hall. Mataji was taking her round within the ashram compound. S. met her near the car-shed. She was looking at the open space outside the shed, where various articles like pieces of firewood, dry leaves and rubbish were lying pell-mell, making the place rather untidy. Pointing that to S. Mataji remarked: "See, this is just like our human body. However well and often we may clean it, it becomes dirty again. This place has been cleaned so very often. Still, see how soon rubbish has accumulated here!"

After a pause, she picked up the threads:

"I have a very bad habit. Wherever I go, I see the faults first. In the ashram when I walk round, the many mistakes and irregularities easily catch my sight. Again, I feel I am responsible for all such defects and shortcomings in the ashram. It is not that we have a dearth of workers here. We have forty workers and they are not idle. If, instead of myself, somebody else like our head-master were to get work out of them, things will be done much better, even with a lesser number."

August 16, 1951

24. It was 7 a.m. Papa was in the bhajan-hall. Sitting in front of
On Conduc- him were a few devotees including Shankar Rao Dhamre (of Shurdi)
ting an and Prem Singh, both of Sholapur district, who had recently come.
Ashram Shankar Rao Dhamre had been thinking seriously of building a
 small ashram in his land at Shurdi, near Osmanabad. He had
written to Papa about it before he came here and Papa had given him permission
to do so. The talk now turned on that subject. Papa told him again as follows:

"When the ashram is ready, it may be named 'Anandashram, Shurdi'. The ashram should be used only for holding satsang, bhajana, kirtans, reading and exposition of scriptures, etc. It should never be used for any worldly purpose like conducting marriages and other social functions. When mahatmas happen to visit your place or near about, invite them to the ashram and hold satsang. Have also regular bhajans there."

Prem Singh then suggested that Janardan Pant Kulkarni might be asked to stay in the ashram to look after the programmes and conduct classes in various religious subjects. Janardan Pant was one of the oldest devotees of Papa and was also a man of learning. Papa approved the suggestion, saying: "Yes, you can ask Janardan Pant to come and stay there. But he should not stay there with his family. The latter may stay in the village, not in the ashram. Please see also that no women are allowed to stay in the ashram at nights. You should be very strict in this matter. Further, do not allow gossips to stay there. Whoever stays in the ashram must spend most of the time in kirtans and japa. If Janardan Pant comes there, you may entrust all internal matters to him. You need look after only the general management. If anybody offers help in the form of cash or kind, you may accept them and keep correct accounts of receipts and expenses. After the ashram is well-established Ramdas will surely visit the place. One more point to be noted is that you should never press people to do any fixed number of japa within a fixed time. They should be left free in the matter. They should have full joy in doing the japa. Compulsion in this matter is no good. Write to Ramdas every month as to how things are going on there."

From 8 a.m. Papa was busy attending to correspondence. Upendra Bhatt, a devotee of Rajkot, had recently returned from a visit to Russia. He had written to Papa giving his impressions of that country. Papa replied to him as below :

“After all, a few days’ stay can give one only a superficial knowledge of a large country like Russia. The Russians seem to have successfully solved the problem of unemployment and food. But above all, what the soul of man hungers for is the inner spiritual peace. This is the outcome of communion with the divine source of our existence. When this is absent, all the material comforts of life cannot bring real happiness and peace.

“Soon, India will rise in all her glory. Then she will be not only spiritually great, but will have material wealth also in plenty. India has a great destiny to fulfil in the world. Her chief heritage is spiritual power and glory. Her children have only to be awakened and made conscious of this rich inheritance. Our rishis and avatars have left their indelible impress upon us all. They belong to all ages and climes. Our outlook also must be universal.”

It was past 8 p.m. Bhajan was just over. Papa was sitting in the bhajan-hall. Mataji came and sat near Papa, who then took out a few letters in Marathi from his letter bag and had them read out to her by an ashramite. Papa was daily reading from the *Jnaneshwari Gita*, or *the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, or some such book, explaining to the mothers of the ashram the meaning in Konkani. But due to pressure of work, the mothers were not able to attend for a few days, and the reading had to be suspended. Getting from the library *Srimad Bhagavata* in Kannada Papa resumed the reading session.

25. T. P. of Jhansi, a pensioner and an old devotee of Papa, had recently been in trouble on account of a criminal case filed against him. He was reported to be very miserly. He had been doing private banking business, lending money on security at high rate of interest, and by that means earning a good deal of money. When Papa went to Jhansi and stayed with him, people used to ask him, ‘How is that you, a saint, happen to be the guest of such a miser who is an exacting money-lender?’ At this question, Papa said he would laugh, so also T. P. Six or seven months ago T. P. lent some money on the security of two or three bicycles. It was later found that the bicycles were stolen properties and the police arrested him for possessing them. He was in police lock-up for a few days. He had now been released on bail and the case was still going on. He was asking for blessings from Papa. There was a postcard from him and Papa was talking about it to Mataji.

Mataji : “Most of the money we receive is earned by the donors not in a proper and good way, some in the blackmarket, some by heavy interest and some by exploiting the poor in other ways.”

Papa : "May be. But if we decide not to have anything to do with things which have come from such sources, Ramdas can tell you, everybody here will have to starve. First you have to stop getting the provisions. The provision merchant is a *pucca* blackmarketer, and even the hay we purchase for cattle passes through the blackmarket."

Mataji did not wish to continue the talk, and went away.

S : "Papa, it is true we cannot stop blackmarketing. But at least Papa's devotees should not engage themselves in it."

Papa : "Who is a devotee and who is not a devotee? Even the provision merchant claims to be a devotee. The argument of these people is that they are children and they consider God as mother. The children get themselves dirty by rolling in the filth of maya and go to the mother. Is it not the mother's duty to clean the children? When She makes them play in filth, it is Her duty to clean them also."

S : "The mother once or twice tolerates, but surely the third time gives such a beating that the child never again gets near filth."

There was a peal of laughter.

Papa : "Perhaps T. P. is getting the beating now—very severe beating too."

August 18, 1951

26. **Sannyas** 7-30 a.m. Papa was sitting in the ashram hall tuning the radio. A sadhu sitting in front of him requested Papa to initiate him into the order of sannyas, to which Papa replied : "No. Ramdas does not initiate anybody into sannyas. He himself was not initiated by any one. He got the call from within and in obedience to that call, he took sannyas himself. His advice to all who come to him is that they may themselves take sannyas similarly, when they feel strongly the call from within."

9-30 a.m. Papa went to see the new hospital building under construction. On the way, his foot struck against a sharp stone and received a small cut. S. informed Mataji about it and requested Ashram hospital nurse, Sarasvati, to apply some medicine. Later on, when Papa was about to rest, S. enquired about the cut, and Papa said : "You see, you asked Sarasvati to apply the medicine ; when Ramdas came out of the bathroom she asked Ramdas to show her where the injury was. Ramdas was unable to find out on which leg it was—left or right. She examined both the legs and found that it was on the left leg and applied the medicine."

In the afternoon, Papa was reading the *Kathopanishad* by himself. When S. went near him, Papa said: "Many sages lived in our country ages ago without taking formal sannyas. Vasishta, Janaka and others were such jnanis. Sannyas, no doubt, helps spiritual progress. But it should be remembered that sannyas is not the end. One has to go beyond sannyas."

27. **Evil, the Creation of the Ignorant Mind** Continuing, he said: "The question is generally asked why there should be so much evil in the world when there is God, who is all love and compassion. But Ramdas does not see evil anywhere. Everywhere it is He and nothing but He. Everything is done by Him alone and He does everything only for good. The so-called evil is not evil. Good cannot come out of evil. Good comes only out of good. So there is no evil in the world. Evil is only the creation of the ignorant mind.

"The jnanis say that the whole world is but the creation of the mind. For one whose mind is absolutely still, the world does not exist. But this is the view of the jnanis. The bhaktas do not care whether the world is real or otherwise. Whatever they see they take as nothing but the manifestation of their Beloved Lord.

"Coming back to the point that good alone comes out of even the so-called evil, let us look at our own present-day national affairs. What Pakistan does for India may apparently seem to be a great evil. But you will see in course of time, that good alone will come out of it. By the threats of war that Pakistan is holding out all parties and communities in India are coming closer and closer together. Thus strong and powerful national unity is developed here. So Pakistan's threats cannot be considered as evil. It is really good, though it may apparently look otherwise. In spite of the war-cries in Pakistan, Ramdas does not think that there will be a war between Pakistan and India. There cannot be."

28. **Mataji—
A Pucca
Communist** In the evening, Papa went out to see the houses which had been newly built by the ashram for the workers. Ramkishor and S. followed him. Two houses were ready for occupation. They looked nice, well-planned and well-finished. They were quite spacious with proper arrangements for kitchen, store-room, bath, etc. Papa remarked that they were very good. He said: "Mataji has built bungalows for the workers. But we do not know how well they will be used and kept by them. She wants to build houses for all the workers. What do you think of her? Hers is pucca communism without its evils. She believes in giving equal treatment and equal comforts to all, without making any distinction of caste, creed, wealth or social position and she puts her ideal into practice. Let her have her own way."

In those days, to avoid exposure to cold, a piece of flannel used to be wound round Papa's waist in the evening. At 5-30 p.m. seeing the flannel lying near him on the stool, S. asked, "Papa, have you abandoned this?"

Papa : "Yes, these upadhis have to be given up, one by one. Why, not only these—finally this body also will be abandoned. So let us see if Ramdas can manage without the flannel today"

Just before bedtime S. gave Papa, as usual, a piece of sugarcandy, when Papa asked : "Who brought this sugarcandy? Was it the mother who came this evening?" S. answered, "Yes". Then Papa said : "She is, indeed, a good mother. Let her come again and again. When she came, Ramdas was looking to see if she had anything with her. He was so happy when she took out a packet and gave Ramdas a piece of sugarcandy."

At this there was loud laughter among the devotees present.

When Papa lay down on the bed, Motiben and S. began to massage his body. Motiben remarked : "Nowadays, Papa is very careful in adjusting the quantity of his food. He is always hesitating to eat, perhaps he is afraid of the weighing machine." Papa's weight was being taken every Monday. Those few weeks his weight had been on the increase and he was trying to bring it down to one hundred and fifteen pounds as suggested by doctors.

Papa : "This weighing business and urine test (for sugar on account of diabetic trouble) should be stopped ! Mahatma Gandhi has said that we should take food like medicine. We have to adjust our daily food in such a way that we take only what is required."

29. Mataji was in the room in the bhajan-hall. Prem Singh's wife and her sister, who had come from Sholapur, requested her to show them the ashram photo albums. So Mataji took all the albums out and began showing them one by one. The sisters were eagerly looking at and questioning Mataji about the photographs. In one of the albums there was a picture taken in Bombay in 1949, of Mataji with her eldest son Ganesh, his daughter and Mataji's two brothers. When S. pointed out to that photo and asked if it was not Ganesh, the attention of the sisters too was drawn to it. Then they asked Mataji to explain who they all were in that picture. In the same room there was a photograph on the wall, taken many years ago, of Mataji and her husband. Pointing to that she said : "Look at the woman sitting there. This (showing Ganesh's picture in the album) is that

woman's son. The other two in this picture (her brothers) are this boy's uncles." S. had a hearty laugh over the way Mataji was describing her own son and brothers to the ladies. Looking at S. Mataji said, "Some people seem to think that I am now keeping Ganesh and Narayan at a distance. That is wrong. What difference is there to me now between them and others? I would never keep them away. They are loved by me as much as others are."

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one to the other
in the same way

IV

Anandashram, August 19, 1951

30. **Karma Affects All** Prem Singh and party, who had been in the ashram for over two months, left this morning. The party took their leave of Papa and Mataji and got into the cart. But Prem Singh walked. Reaching the gate he made a dandavat namaskar towards the ashram bhajan-hall. Then again, having gone a few yards, he made another and yet another after going a few more yards before reaching the Vidyalyaya building. Then he was out of sight and nobody knew how many more dandavats he did before he reached the railway station !

It was 2 p.m. Papa was sitting in the bhajan-hall. Iqbalnath, Natverlal Shah and S. were sitting in front of him.

Papa (to Iqbalnath) : "Which religious book is most popular in Kashmir ?"

Iqbalnath : *The Bhagavad Gita.*

Papa : "That is true of all places. The teachings of *the Gita* are universal. One who is engaged in karma (action) is affected by it ; so also the one who has renounced all karmas. However detached one may live in the world, one is likely to be affected. So, if those who have renounced and those who have not renounced are both affected, why not one engage oneself in work and worry rather than do nothing and worry ? Even great saints and avatars, when moving in the world, were affected by it. But in their case the disturbance is only like a wave that comes and goes without touching them inwardly. During the Mahabharata war Sri Krishna got angry when challenged by Bhishma. Buddha was filled with sorrow when he saw the miseries of the world. Christ flogged the money-lenders. So when you are in the world you have to face all kinds of things.

31. **Ramdas on his Wandering Days—avoid Worldly Contacts** "See our own case. Mataji is engaged in so much activity. She is in fact fed up with it. She did so much for these people around her, hoping that they would improve and progress. But she has been completely disillusioned now. She says we made a great blunder in starting this ashram. We could have lived in forests and caves and begged for our food. In fact, Ramdas was for that kind of life. When we left Kasaragod, Ramdas would have

gone away wandering. But Mataji would not leave him. She wanted to follow him wherever he went.

"When Ramdas took to a wandering life, he was thoroughly reckless. He would stay anywhere and everywhere. He would go without food for days together. When he was fasting, how could his companion eat? God gave Ramdas great power of endurance.

"When Ramdas was in Srinagar, he went and occupied the cave in the Sankaracharya hill. Knowing this, the devotees were so much upset that they came and pressed Ramdas to come down from the hill. Ramdas did not listen to them. Winter was fast approaching. Ramdas stayed on there a few days. During his stay he did not even use water for any purpose. Caves and mountains had a great fascination for him. If Mataji were to follow Ramdas, it would be very difficult for her. Of course, she does not mind suffering. She has conquered death and is not afraid of anything. But, her health would have been shattered to pieces. Now, considering the amount of work she is doing here, perhaps it would have been better to wander and live in the forests."

S : "When Papa was wandering, as described in the book *In the Vision of God*, was not Papa affected by the world?"

Papa : "Then Ramdas had very little contact with the world. Most of the time he spent in the company of sadhus. Saints are like snake-charmers who, having controlled the cobra, can play with it. Worldly influences do not disturb their inner tranquillity. Their spiritual attainments do not permit the poison of worldliness to enter into their minds. But a sadhaka who is still struggling to attain the goal must avoid all worldly contacts. He must be very careful, and devote all his energy to his sadhana. Some advanced sadhakas, feeling that they are strong enough, engage themselves in worldly activities and often fall. Before one is firmly established in the Reality one should not get into the world-current, which is apt to carry him away. Only those who are ever conscious of the Reality can see the world as the lila of the Lord. So long as the ego-sense persists, one cannot see the world as God's lila."

9-30 p.m. When the usual reading of *the Bhagavata* was over, Papa said : "It is said that those who hear *the Bhagavata* will go to Vaikuntha. How many of you here would like to go? But remember, the she-buffalo has now delivered a calf. She will be yielding a lot of milk and you can take thick milk and curds. How can you go now? Let Lord Vishnu wait for some time. Is it not? Of course, by that time another buffalo will have delivered a calf, and this will go on and on, so that Vishnu will have to wait for you indefinitely!"

All present roared with laughter.

August 21, 1951

32. 7-45 a.m. A young man from Palghat arrived at the ashram, and **Renunciation**, was brought straight to the dining-hall for breakfast. He was **No Joke** asked to have a wash before taking coffee. A few minutes afterwards a loud cry was heard. The young man was seen then prostrating before Mataji and was weeping and sobbing like a child. Mataji directed him to go to Papa who was in the bhajan-hall. The moment he saw Papa, he started again crying and sobbing, and fell at Papa's feet. He was saying something which, though not clearly audible, indicated that he had no peace of mind.

Papa: "Take Ramnam, everything will be all right. It is no use merely weeping. Take Ramnam in earnest."

He slowly calmed down and was taken to the dining-hall for breakfast. After the morning bhajan, Papa gave him the Ram-mantra. In the evening, he had a talk with Papa whom he requested for permission to stay on in the ashram.

Papa: "That is not advisable. Ramdas has given you Ram-mantra. Now you may go home and repeat the mantra."

Young man: "Swamiji, I do not like to return home. My wife and children have enough money to carry on without my help. I want to take sannyas and need your advice in the matter."

Papa: "If you are determined to devote all your time to God, then you may go to a place like Rishikesh and do intense sadhana."

Young man: "Who will give me food there?"

Papa: "One who is earnest in quest of God, will not worry about his food or such matters. He will rely entirely on God."

Young man: "Swamiji, please tell me if I am fit for it."

Papa: "One who is really fit will never put such a question. The very question shows that you are not yet ready."

Papa continued: "Complete renunciation is not a joke. It is like climbing up a cocoanut tree and letting off your hands. You have to give up everything—money, position, name, relations, friends, etc., and rely on God entirely. There are people who take sannyas, keeping a decent bank balance, or having a good pension. What kind of renunciation is it? They simply say they do not depend upon anybody, while in truth they depend upon their assets and not on God. If they happen to

hear about the crash of any bank, their mind at once turns in anxiety to their deposit. How can they progress? Spiritual sadhana is not easy. It is as hard and perilous as walking on a razor's edge."

Young man: "Swamiji, you are Ram Himself. You should guide me. You surely know if I am fit or not."

Papa: "Ram is also within you. It is on Ram within that you have to depend and not on anyone outside. If you depend on the guidance of Ramdas, how long can you have such guidance from without? It will be, say, for a day or two. After that, what will you do? So depend on Ram within you."

33. **Temples, Ancient and Modern** That day talk before bedtime was about the ancient and modern temples. Papa remarked: "See how nice and holy the ancient temples are. The whole atmosphere there is surcharged with spirituality. The moment you enter them you feel thrills. But the modern temples have not that life in them. During one of his tours Ramdas visited a temple. Lakhs of rupees were spent on it. But the spiritual atmosphere is lacking. Look at the ancient temples. Great men built them. They did not want the temples to be known by the names of the persons who built them. Nowadays the merchants make a lot of money and spend lakhs on such pious acts to wash their sins away. They cannot wash sins off this way. But if they give all they possess in charity and stop earning money in bad ways, they will surely be free of their sins. Remember, all their money must be spent for the service of God."

August 28, 1951

34. **The Bond of Affection between Papa and Ramkishor** After his usual evening rounds to the Vidyalaya and hospital, Papa had just returned. Before entering the bhajan-hall he saw Ramkishor running about with his friends in the maidan just outside the ashram. Papa told S. who was with him: "See that boy, how he runs. By the time he returns home he is completely tired. Though he is there playing about, his mind is definitely on Ramdas because Ramdas is also thinking of him. His love for Ramdas is so great. He does not care for his mother. He can live away from her, but not from Ramdas. What attachment, what love! He must have had very close connection with Ramdas in his previous births and that too not of an ordinary type, but an extraordinary, strong spiritual connection. Otherwise what relation is there between us? Considering his case, Ramdas often thinks how Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa loved Rakhal. When Rakhal could not be seen one day, Paramahansa was not feeling happy. He found future greatness in Rakhal. So also Ramdas finds future greatness in this boy."

35. **Modes of Imparting Spiritual Power** Swami Ramachandrananda Sarasvati, a great devotee of Sri Sai Baba, came to the ashram at 6 p.m. He used to come here often, being a great admirer of Papa. After paying his respects to Papa, he told S. that while in Shirdi (where rests the Samadhi of Sri Sai Baba) he got a message from Sri Sai Baba to visit Anandashram and so he took the earliest opportunity to have darshan of Papa.

After the usual reading of *Srimad Bhagavata* at night, Swami Ramachandrananda was sitting near Papa, conversing with him.

Papa : "Did you go to Rishikesh recently?"

Swami : "Yes, Papa, I was there in May last. I went to Badri also."

Papa : "How many times have you been to Badri?"

Swami : "Twice, Papa."

Papa : "A devotee going to Badri is pulled towards it again and again. Such is the charm of the Himalayas!"

Swami : "Papa, this is also Badri. You are the Badri Narayana here. At Badrinath, before the deity we can only meditate. But here, before you, we can also talk."

Papa : "Which do you like—talking or meditating?"

Swami : "Both."

Papa : "Ramdas is nowadays talking rather too much. Of course, you know Ramdas usually does not give lectures. Spiritual power is rarely imparted through talks or lectures. More is done through touch, look and thought—through silent communion. In ancient days, our rishis never lectured to large audiences. Talks about high spiritual matters to a large lay audience are practically useless. A large number of them are not able to grasp the subject. That was why the rishis taught only a few select disciples who lived intimately with them. For the awakening of God-consciousness, even talking is not essential. The saint simply looks at a person, or touches him, or thinks of him, and the thing is done. The first method is compared to that of fish that hatches its eggs by simply gazing intently at them; the second to that of a bird sitting on her eggs to hatch them, and the third to that of a tortoise that only thinks of her eggs and hatches them."

Swami : "Papa, whenever you are free I want some time with you."

Papa : "Yes, you can talk to Ramdas any time you like."

Swami : "When I am in your presence, I do not wish to talk at all. Darshan satisfies me and it gives me all the joy I need."

August 29, 1951

36. The usual reading from *the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* was over at
God Hungers 3 p.m. There were some ashramites and visitors in the bhajan-hall.
for Love— After taking coffee that was brought to him, Papa said to the
Story of a devotees : "Ramdas will tell you a story, listen. Once there was a
Butcher- butcher in a small town. He was a great bhakta. Even when
Bhakta plying his trade, he used to take God's name mentally, and in
 course of time, he found it hard to kill animals. He, therefore,
stopped killing. But he had to carry on his business as he had no other means of
livelihood. So he purchased meat and sold the same at a small profit. For weighing
the meat the butcher was using a stone which happened to be a salagram the
sanctity of which he had no idea. He did not even remember how the stone came to
his hands. He was using it for a long time.

"One day, a brahmin, who was passing in front of his shop, chanced to see
the butcher placing the salagram on the balance for weighing meat. Naturally, the
brahmin was surprised. He therefore asked the butcher to have the stone washed
and handed over to him for closer scrutiny. Confirming that it was a salagram he
enquired why the butcher used such a sacred stone for weighing meat. The innocent
butcher replied that he did not know anything about a salagram or its sanctity. The
brahmin then explained to him that salagram was a sacred thing to be worshipped
daily with flowers, sandal paste, etc. The brahmin also requested for permission
to take the salagram with him so that it could be worshipped along with the other
deities in his house. The butcher readily agreed.

"The brahmin took it home and kept it in his pooja room with the other images
of God he had, and carried on the worship as usual with elaborate rituals and costly
offering of food, etc. But the deity embodied in the salagram did not like the
change. It missed in the brahmin's house the spirit of true love and devotion which
it found in the butcher's shop. Unable to bear the loveless worship and company of
the brahmin any longer, the deity appeared to him in a dream and said : "Why have
you brought me here ? I was very happy with the butcher who is a true devotee. He
was always chanting my holy names and now and then putting me gently on the
balance with his own hand. Oh, what a soft hand he has ! His touch is like a warm
embrace. His heart is full of prem. He was talking with his customers mostly
about my glories and praising me and repeating my name always. But here, for

want of love and devotion, I am not at all happy, though you give me rich offerings and panchamrita abhisheka, and perform elaborate pooja. Please take me back to the butcher so that I can again be happy."

After finishing the story Papa added : "God is hungering only for love. He is not satisfied with mere religious forms and ceremonial worship. Pure love and devotion alone will satisfy Him."

37. In the evening, Papa went for a walk followed by S. In the
Daya vs. course of conversation about the distinction between worldly and
Maya divine love, Papa said : "Sri Ramakrishna loved Hriday who
attended on him for many years and who happened to be a relation
of his. He used to say that maya is love towards one's own relations, which brings
about attachment and bondage. Daya is love for all beings, irrespective of any
bodily affinities or relationships. He used to ask his devotee if his love for Hriday
was pure or tainted, if it was daya or maya."

S : "How could it be maya in his case? Sri Ramakrishna had severed himself
from all narrow domestic ties and merged himself in the ocean of divine love which
embraced the whole universe. Hriday was therefore to him only one of the wider
circle. He loved him only as he loved anybody else."

Papa : "That is exactly the point. Sri Ramakrishna would have loved Hriday
even if he were not a relation. In fact, he loved Rakhal more. And Rakhal was not
related to him by ties of blood. So, relation or no relation was not at all the
consideration which weighed with Sri Ramakrishna. He loved those who were
pure-hearted and devoted to God. His love was therefore daya and not maya."

September 2, 1951

38. Early in the morning, D. D. Joshi of Cannanore arrived at the
Renunciation, ashram with a batch of devotees and a sannyasi friend of his who
only had come from Rishikesh. Papa was in the bhajan-hall. Entering
A means the hall, the party paid their respects to Papa and after a few
minutes were taken to the dining-hall for tea. Papa also
accompanied them and sat with them for coffee. From the dining-hall they all went
to the house where the visitors were to stay. There, in the central hall, Papa sat
on the floor and the devotees sat around him. The sannyasi friend requested Papa
to say a few words.

Papa : "Ramdas is only a child before you. He likes to listen more than to
talk. So let him have the joy of hearing you. Will you please talk on something?"

Sannyasi : "Swamiji, why do you say so? What are we before you? We are but your children. Still the father likes to hear the children prattle."

With this preface he talked for over half an hour on jnana.

After the evening bhajan, Joshiji and other devotees were sitting before Papa in the bhajan-hall. Joshiji had certain doubts. He asked Papa about renunciation. Joshiji had been a follower of the path of bhakti, trying his best to lead the life of a true householder. He was not at first assailed by doubts as to the efficacy of his path. But, after he came into contact with that sannyasi friend and heard his talks on jnana yoga he was beginning to feel disturbed. He wanted to get the matter cleared up, and requested Papa to remove his lingering doubts.

Papa: "Never think that you are the perishable body. Always identify yourself with the Spirit, the imperishable, changeless Atman. When you fully realise that you are the Atman and not the body—which you can do only after practising long dissociation from the body—you will not be bound by anything. You are then free. As a true householder, you are to consider that the whole of your property, your wife and children belong to God and that you are only His agent, entrusted by Him with the task of running the household. This is the right spirit in which a householder should carry on his duties. If you are able to adopt this attitude, why should you have to become a sannyasi? Is not every one in your household, verily, the manifestation of Brahman? You cannot easily give up the world as mere illusion. As long as the ego-sense is alive in you, the world is real to you. Having the body-idea you cannot say, 'I am Brahman.' And, after all, renunciation is only a means to an end. You have ultimately to realise the whole universe as the manifestation of the Lord, as a part of His lila. Through bhakti you attain jnana and after attaining jnana, you have to go still beyond that to what is called para-bhakti. A mere jnani says the whole universe is an illusion. But one who has reached the plane of para-bhakti sees the whole universe as Brahman. Then he does not call it an illusion, but as the Lord's lila, though at the same time, he knows the play to be impermanent and transitory and so does not get entangled in it.

"So if a householder is able to lead a purely detached life, with the full consciousness that Brahman alone is real and that the whole universe, including his own family and possessions, are nothing but manifestations of God, he will realise Him. There is no need for such a one to renounce the family, as he is fully aware of the impermanence of the world and is not deceived by this passing show. He is absolutely detached and so is happy under all conditions. Whether his relations live or die, whether his business fails or flourishes, he ever remains happy and cheerful, being firmly established in the consciousness of the divine."

39. **Jnana Born of Bhakti. Sankara not Properly Understood. Sadhana for Householders** It was about 7 o'clock in the morning. Joshiji was sitting in front of Papa when S. entered the bhajan-hall. Joshiji was continuing yesterday's discussion with Papa on jnana.

Papa said : "Jnana is born in the womb of bhakti and protected by bhakti. The jnanis say that the universe is an illusion. When Ramdas was once in Mount Abu, he was taken to a mahatma living there, known as Swami Kaivalyananda. Going near the mahatma, Ramdas prostrated before him. The latter sprang up and asked Ramdas, 'To whom are you prostrating?' Ramdas replied, 'Ramdas is prostrating to Ram.' He asked again, 'Are you not the same Ram?' Ramdas said, 'Yes, Ram is in Ramdas also. He knows he is one with Ram, but at the same time, he wants to be His child and prostrate to Him as a child does to its mother.' Swami Kaivalyananda said, 'Oh, that is all false. The whole universe is an illusion. There is only one, no two'."

Papa resumed thread of his talk : "To attain the highest realisation, one need not necessarily reject the world as an illusion. It may be that for some time when the mind is fully drawn within, the sadhaka feels that Brahman alone is real and the whole world is unreal. But, after this inner experience, he realises that what he once rejected as unreal is only an expression or manifestation of the Real. There were many bhaktas like Saint Tukaram, Eknath and others who had attained the highest realisation through the path of bhakti alone. They never had to reject the world as unreal.

"A sadhaka on the path of jnana might be able to consider the world as illusion for some time by the withdrawal of the mind inwards, but the moment the mind is externalised, diversities are again observed and the inner conflict will rise up. But a sadhaka on the bhakti path goes on joyously singing the sweet name of the Lord, rejecting nothing and accepting everything as the very embodiment of his Beloved. So his sadhana itself is turned into a sadhya. That is, the means becomes the end. The bhakta finds so much joy in his sadhana that even after attaining his goal, he likes to continue his sadhana, if possible keeping up his individuality, just for the joy of it.

"Sri Sankara was, no doubt, a great advaitin, who proclaimed that Brahman alone is real, but he admitted that the manifest and the unmanifest are both Brahman. He also established various temples and mutts, wrote many stotras glorifying the Divine Mother and also composed songs like *Bhaja Govindam* which lay stress on the value of bhakti. These show that he was not a mere jnani, but had

attained the highest stage of para-bhakti. Sri Sankara is not properly understood nowadays.

“The most natural and easy way of approach to God is through bhakti. Love begins to manifest itself in us from our very childhood. The child loves and is deeply devoted to its mother and father. As he grows up his circle of love is gradually widened and he becomes attached to friends and relations besides his family members. This love and devotion to mother, father, etc., has only to be purified and directed towards God. Thus we should look upon Him alone as mother, father, friend, etc. This is a natural and easy process. We start from duality and end in unity.

“The easiest path is to take the name of God. Love Him and sing His sweet name. You need not know anything more. You need not study any philosophy. Ever remembering Him and with His sweet name on your tongue, you can walk on the path blissfully. It matters not whether the world is believed to be real or unreal. For the devotee, everything is but the form of his Beloved.”

It was evening. Papa was sitting in the open, outside the bhajan-hall. Joshiji and a few members of his party were sitting in front of him. They were about to leave and asked Papa for a message.

Papa said : “You are all householders. The best sadhana for you is to repeat Ramnam constantly. Always do your work remembering God, who is dwelling within you. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it, engage one hand of yours in your work and by the other hold on to the feet of the Lord. After the work is over, place both the hands on the Lord’s feet. Your mind must always be fixed on God. The mind has a natural tendency to wander. But wherever the mind goes, try to see God there. It cannot go where God is not, because God is everywhere. By such practice the mind will gradually be purified and trained to stay always on God. We should view the world as a drama, as a lila of God. By being ever conscious of the Eternal, the all-pervading Reality, we should at the same time play our parts in the world-drama. We should be detached witnesses of our own actions and also of the world-play. We have to take care not to get attached to the world of diversity, to this passing show. Then only we can enjoy the play.”

Joshiji and party, including the Rishikesh sannyasi, left the ashram after taking prasad around 7 o’clock.

V

Anandashram, September 5, 1951

40. After midday meal, Papa was resting. Mataji, standing near his
Ganesh cot, was fanning him. Motiben and S. were massaging his body.
Pooja Mataji asked S. : "Where is Natverlal ?"

S : "He must have gone to Anna's (T. Bhavanishanker Rao's) house."

Sri Bhavanishanker Rao was an old devotee of the ashram. After retirement from Government service, he lived in his house near the ashram. His wife, Lakshmi Devi was Papa's sister. Both the husband and the wife were greatly devoted to Papa. God made them instruments to help Papa in the construction of this ashram. They were celebrating Vinayaka Chaturthi that day and had invited, among many ashramites, Natverlal Shah also for the feast at their house.

Mataji : "Natverlal does not seem to be well nowadays. What is the matter ? Do you know ?"

S : "There is nothing wrong with him as far as I know."

Papa (*to Mataji*) : "Ramdas asked Natverlal yesterday whether he would like to go away or stay on when we are away from the ashram on tour. He replied, 'As you suggest'. He seems to be quite happy here. There is nothing to worry him. His mind is at peace."

In the evening Papa started to go out earlier than usual. He called S. and told him : "Ramdas is going to Anna's house to see the image of Ganapati. Amma (Lakshmi Devi) has requested Ramdas to go there in the evening."

So Papa, Ramkishor, S. and some children went together to Anna's house. Papa spent a few minutes there, entered the pooja room and saw the image of Ganapati. Anna and all members of the family prostrated one by one before Papa. Lakshmi Devi offered various kinds of sweets to Papa and others who had accompanied him.

41. It was about 10 o'clock in the morning. Papa was sitting in the veranda of the building behind the bhajan-hall. Talking about setbacks in sadhana, he said to S. : "Without vairagya one cannot properly derive benefit from Ramnam. Taken with intense vairagya and faith, the Guru-mantra produces wonderful results. By constant repetition of Ramnam and training the mind to dwell on God always and by being conscious of Him as the all-pervading Reality, as well as by satsang, the sadhaka can go beyond the dvandvas. Bhakti is a safe path, though setbacks are inevitable here also. If any disturbance is caused, the aspirant is apt to get upset, feeling that he has fallen. But such temporary setbacks can be remedied by going to his teacher and explaining everything. Learning the cause of the setback from his guru, he returns and resumes his practice with greater zeal. At such times he should get away from the busy world and go into solitude to practise intense sadhana. Thus setbacks prove helpful to drive the mind inwards and to do sadhana with redoubled vigour."

It was noon. Papa was sitting on his cot and was about to take his midday rest. Mataji was sitting near the cot, making flower-garlands. Natverlal Shah and S. were standing by their side.

Mataji (to Natverlal) : "Yesterday Papa said that you are a good man."

Natverlal kept quiet. Then Papa added : "By saying to his face that he is a good man, he is not spoiled. But there are certain people who, by such remarks, get so puffed up that they seem to burst."

All laughed.

Mataji was looking at Natverlal. She noticed that his dhoti was not well washed. She asked him : "Did you not use soap to wash your dhoti? Have you not got soap with you?"

Natverlal : I have soap, but I did not use it. When a sadhu came the other day and asked you for some money for constructing a Krishna Mandir, you asked him to make Krishna's Mandir first in his own heart before building it outside. So I must try to clean my inside first."

Then Papa remarked : "He wants to apply soap inside first. Is that right?"

Natverlal (smiling) : "Yes, Papa."

42. About 9-30 a.m. a party consisting of Swami Krishnananda and other friends arrived from Trichur. The Swami was permitted by Ramdas Papa to adopt sannyas early that year. After that, he went on a Belongs to all Religions pilgrimage to Badrinath and, returning from the Himalayas, had been staying in a lonely place near Trichur.

In the afternoon, Swami Krishnananda with the Trichur friends came to the bhajan-hall and introduced his friends to Papa. One among them was a Christian named N. P. Verghese. The Swami told Papa that Verghese was a very pious soul who was regular in saying his prayers.

Papa (to Verghese) : "It is good you are regular in your prayers. You should continue the practice. Christ is a great saviour. His name is as great as Ramnam. Christ should not be looked upon as a mere human being. He is the all-pervading Reality. You should create and develop Christ-consciousness in you. You can repeat the name of Christ taking initiation from some Christian saint."

Swami Krishnananda : "I have told this friend that Papa is also a Christian."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas is a Christian, a Mussalman and everything else. He belongs to all religions and all religions are his. He holds that Christ's name is as powerful as Rama's or Krishna's. Our friend should repeat the name of Christ with all faith and devotion. He should spend a few minutes daily for deep meditation. He must also read the New Testament. He will profit by that."

On behalf of Verghese, the Swami asked Papa if he had any objection to giving Verghese the mantra of Christ. Papa said he had absolutely no objection.

43. Swami Krishnananda : "What is the spiritual value of fasting?
Fast on a Call I have read in your books that fasting is helpful to sadhakas."
from Within

Papa : "Yes, fasting is good especially when you are mentally or physically disturbed. But it should not be made a matter of routine. You may fast only when you get a call from within to fast, otherwise not. If you fast as a mere routine, for example, on all Ekadasi days, it might be that you will be fasting when you had no real call and so should not, and you may not be fasting when you felt the call and so should. By forced fasting you will not gain much spiritually, as your mind may be inclined to dwell on foodstuffs."

Papa then started reading *the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. When the reading was over, Swami Krishnananda asked : "Why was Sri Ramakrishna so uneasy in the presence of evil-minded persons?"

Papa : "He was always in a state of suddhasatva. One who is in that state cannot bear the presence of evil-minded persons. Although Sri Ramakrishna had gone beyond the gunas, still he preferred to remain in satva. The ways of saints are mysterious!"

44. Swami Krishnananda : "Papa read just now that Sri Ramakrishna asked one of his devotees if he was meditating too much and advised him not to strain himself. What is the meaning of 'meditating too much'? Can meditation ever be excessive?"

Meditation must be Spontaneous

Papa : "Sri Ramakrishna might have noticed in the devotee weakness, depression, and so on and attributed them to overstrain in meditation. Too much of force put on the mind during meditation is not good. Meditation should be spontaneous. It should come without much exertion. If you have to exert much and feel fatigue in the process, it means you are not yet quite fit for that sadhana. When you are not ready, there is no use unduly forcing the mind. The result will be extreme weakness, depression and dullness. When you come out of your meditation, your face should be bright and you should feel blissful. Meditation must make you more and more cheerful. During meditation you are communing with God—the embodiment of Bliss. And how can its after-effect be anything other than pure bliss and joy?"

Another friend asked Papa if he should repeat Ramnam during meditation.

Papa : "Better repeat the mantra when you begin. Repetition will help you to still the mind. When the mind is perfectly still, repetition automatically stops."

Papa continued : "When you repeat Ramnam you should bring to your mind the attributes of God. You should also cultivate love for Ramnam. The moment you hear the Name, it should cause in you spiritual joy. That comes only after continuous repetition of the Name for a long time. If somebody chants Ramnam even at a distance, your mind will be drawn there immediately. The devotee's love for Ramnam should be like the miser's love for money. The miser may be busy with many things. If a coin falls on the ground, even at a distance, he will be instantly attracted by the sound, though some persons very near may not hear it at all. That is so because his mind is so much centred on money. Our mind too should be similarly consumed with love for God's name."

September 14, 1951

8 a.m. Swami Krishnananda and the Trichur friends were sitting in front of Papa in the bhajan-hall. Papa gave some of them the sacred mantra. Verghese requested Papa for the mantra of Jesus Christ. Papa gave him the mantra and told

him : "Repeat this mantra constantly. Enshrine Christ in your heart which will then be gradually purified and you will have the darshan of Christ. Remember God is Love. Live a life of Love. Then you will live in God and God will live in you."

Verghese prostrated, his eyes moist with tears.

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa said yesterday that meditation should not be tiresome and depressing. When one feels extreme viraha in meditation, the agony of not having attained God, how can one avoid feeling depressed?"

Papa : "Do you mean to say that when one sits for meditation, one struggles to fix one's mind on God, but fails and therefore feels depressed. Is it so?"

Swami Krishnananda : "Yes."

Papa : "Then you refer only to the sadhaka's struggle to fix his mind firmly on the Ishta. He has not yet reached the stage of true meditation, which really means communing with God. There is no question of struggle there."

45. A friend asked : "On which part of the body are we to concentrate
Concentrate on God in our meditation?"
in Heart Centre
or Above

Papa : "God is everywhere, but generally we concentrate in the heart, or the centre between the eyebrows. Those who meditate on the forms of God concentrate in the heart and those who meditate on light concentrate in the centre between the eyebrows. Some concentrate on the sound of the name of God, i.e., the Sabda Brahman. When the divine forms and lights are transcended, the body-idea completely disappears and the kundalini rises to the Sahasrara, bringing about the union of the individual soul with the Cosmic Soul. This is the state of nirvikalpa samadhi. There are the oordhvagati and adhogati—the upward and downward movements—of the kundalini. The mind should not be fixed in centres below the heart centre. Else, it will be attracted to sense-pleasures. So, it should always dwell either in the heart or in the forehead centre."

Talking about physical pain and suffering, Papa said : "You should feel you are the immortal Spirit and not this perishable body. If any pain is caused to the body, remember it is only for the body. You, as the supreme Spirit, are not really affected by it. Of course, during states of spiritual ecstasy, physical pain and suffering are not at all felt. The mind is then completely absorbed in God-consciousness."

Asked to give some advice to householder devotees, Papa said : "Remember that forgetfulness of God is sin and remembrance of God is virtue. Try to think of

God constantly. Surrender to His will. If you strive to reach the goal by your own effort, you will have any number of falls. But if you allow God to take care of you, you are safe in His hands. Make God your guide and protector, and your sarathi—the driver of your chariot. Then you are quite safe. See how Arjuna managed to win the battle against heavy odds by having Sri Krishna for his sarathi. So long as your 'I'—ego—sense—is persisting, God is far away from you. You should do sadhana to overcome the ego. Then alone God can take possession of you."

A friend asked : "May we concentrate on the mooladhara (base of the spinal column) to awaken the kundalini?"

Papa : "Some do concentrate there, the hatha-yogis especially. But by concentrating in the heart-centre, or further up in the centre between the eyebrows, you can as well draw up the kundalini from the mooladhara by divine grace. For drawing water from a well, a pump working on the upper ground level is used. It draws up the water from the bottom by its force. You do not have to go to the bottom of the well and push the water upwards. So also in yoga."

In the evening Swami Krishnananda and party left for Trichur.

VI

Anandashram, September 15, 1951

46. Papa had just returned from his usual evening walk and was sitting in the bhajan-hall. S. gave him a cup of water, which he drank and said: "Ramdas slept very well last night; so also this afternoon. Natverlal Shah was fanning him this afternoon so nicely that Ramdas felt like lying down longer."

Natverlal Shah

S.: "Natverlal is doing it everyday. Anything special today?"

Papa: "Don't know. It was very nice today."

Continuing, he said: "See, how good Natverlal is. He is so guileless, simple, most unassuming and, above all, most harmless. He is completely egoless. He is so humble and unassuming that we do not know if he is here or not. We want people like him in the ashram. Ramdas feels sorry to leave him. Why not we take him also with us when we start on tour? If you ask him he will say he has nothing to decide. Ramdas has to decide for him. That was why he was a failure in the world. He has reduced himself to nothing. How can he go for a job and work?"

47. Papa went out of the bhajan-hall and took his seat on the cement bench in front of the ashram, when Bhavanishanker Rao (Anna) came, prostrated and sat near him. Papa asked him with a smile, "What is the matter?"

Dharam Devi

Bhavanishanker Rao: "I was reading old copies of *The Vision* and came across an article written by you years ago about Dharam Devi. I would like to know more about her. It seems you met her in Delhi during your last tour."

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas met her in Delhi at General A. N. Sharma's house. Now she has grown up. She has got a circle of devotees who sing bhajans and kirtans with her. One day the devotees came to see her at Sharma's house and started singing kirtans with her. She sang, 'Radheshyam, Radheshyam' and in a few minutes went into a trance and lay flat on the ground. She goes into such trances very often. She is now learning English and will soon appear for the B.A.

examination. She speaks Hindi very well. One evening during satsang at Rameshwar Dayal's house, Swami Sharananandaji and many other sannyasins were present. Dharam Devi had also come there with Ramdas. Swami Sharananandaji is a jnani, advocate of mithya-vada. He always talked from his point of view. Though he did not like the bhakti path, he liked Ramdas very much. On this occasion he spoke for some time in Hindi. Next, Ramdas spoke in English about his universal vision. Dharam Devi was asked to translate Ramdas's speech into Hindi, which she did very beautifully."

48. About 9 p.m. Bhajan was over. Papa was sitting in the bhajan-hall near the radio. A taxi came and stopped in front of the ashram. **A Dangerous Book !** An American couple, James Harley and his wife, got out, entered the ashram hall and paid their respects to Papa. They had given previous intimation about their arrival from Bombay. Papa greeted them with a smile.

Mrs. Harley : "Are we disturbing you ?"

Papa : "No, not at all. Did you have a pleasant journey ?"

Mr. and Mrs. Harley together : "Yes, thank you. It was fine. From Mysore we travelled through the beautiful coffee estates and reached Cannanore and from there took the train."

Papa : "Now you may go to your rooms, have a wash, food and rest. We shall meet in the morning."

The couple were then taken to their quarters.

Papa (*to the ashramites sitting near him*) : "How did these friends come to know about this ashram ?"

Dayanand : "They had ordered some books some months ago."

Papa : "What books ?"

Dayanand : "*In Quest of God* and *In the Vision of God*."

Papa (*laughing*) : "Those who read these two books are caught. The first one alone is enough !"

S : "That is why Papa said once that it is a dangerous book !"

Papa : "Yes, it is indeed so. The mere reading of the books has brought these friends here."

49. **Sorrow for Human Suffering** Harvesting of the ashram paddy fields started. At 9 o'clock in the morning Papa and Mataji went to the fields and returned soon. On the way they had to pass by the house of Tyampanna Adhikari who had a grandson about two years old, suffering from enlargement of liver. When Papa neared the house, the thought of the child came to him and he spoke something to Mataji about the boy. On reaching the ashram, Papa said, "When Ramdas was a student in the V. J. T. Institute, Bombay, he had a friend with whom he stayed. He loved Ramdas so much that whenever he brought anything, he gave to Ramdas too. He loved to be in Ramdas's company always. Once the friend took ill. Ramdas nursed him with all love, but the illness proved fatal. Ramdas, unable to bear the loss, wept bitterly for the departed friend. This was the one and only occasion when Ramdas cried bitterly over the death of anyone. This happened in Ramdas's earlier life. Later on, he has been able to control his feelings. When Balaji's daughter Ammini died in Bombay and the news was received here, Ramdas was about to burst into tears, but he controlled himself. When anybody is seriously ill in the ashram, Ramdas's heart begins to burn. He silently grieves and asks Ram why He is not curing the patient, and generally the patient is cured. In the case of Ammini's illness, Ramdas was told that she was progressing well towards recovery. It was felt that if she had been in the ashram, probably God would have saved her."

S : "Why should saints feel like this when they know that the body is perishable ? Is it not also attachment ?"

Papa : "No. Sri Ramakrishna used to feel much when any of his devotees took ill. Even Sri Ramana Maharshi, the great jnani that he was, felt disturbed when a devoted woman in the ashram was ill-treated and sent away. It is said that he refused to take food till she was brought back."

After the midday meal, Papa was in the bhajan-hall and about to rest. He remarked to S. : "Life is a strange game. The more you stand aloof and watch the world-play, the more mysterious it is. We have to be the witness, ever aware of the Atman and should never get entangled in the game."

S : "What about identifying oneself with everybody and sharing the joys and sorrows ?

Papa : "That is another aspect. You see, a jnani is not hard-hearted. He is deeply moved by suffering. Those who have realised God know fully well that the one Truth has manifested itself as the many. When they identify themselves with this Truth, they naturally identify themselves with its manifestation also and feel for the sufferings of others."

S : "When we have realised the Atman, we see the Atman alone everywhere—in our bodies and others' bodies. When anything happens to our body we are not internally affected. So, how can we be affected when anything happens to other bodies?"

Papa : "When anything happens to your body, true, you are not internally affected. That is to say, the Atman is not affected. So also when there is suffering to another body, you are not internally affected. But externally it will be exactly so when your own body suffers. You are bound to feel the sufferings in both cases externally. When you realise you are one with the Reality which is everywhere and in everybody, and also that that very Reality has manifested Itself as all physical bodies, you are one with others internally and externally."

September 28, 1951

50. The previous day K. K. Chandorkar, a Marathi-speaking devotee, had come to the ashram with his wife and daughter from Khurda Road. At 10 a.m. when Papa was returning from the hospital building, they were seen waiting outside the bhajan-hall to talk with Papa. On seeing Papa, they prostrated before him. Papa took his seat on the cement bench in front of the bhajan-hall. They wanted mantra initiation. So Papa asked them to sit facing him and gave them Ramnam. Then he told them : "You may go on repeating the mantra continuously. There are no restrictions to be observed at all. But you should do the japa with all love and devotion to God. You may carry on your work in the world, but always remember God. Cultivate nishkama-bhakti. Do not ask worldly things from God. Let Him provide them as and when He chooses. Pray to Him to grant only devotion and spiritual freedom. Remember, the purpose of life is to attain Him. Satsang is also necessary. Seek the company of saints. Their talks will elevate you. Another point to note is that you should first surrender yourself to God and then take His name. You should feel that even the repetition of the mantra is done by you because He is making you do it. Then progress is easy. It is quickened if you find sweetness in the Name. That can come only when you have intense love for God."

September 29, 1951

51. After the bhajan at night, Papa was reading the letters received that evening. S. and others were near him. Papa said : "This letter is from Sir Chunilal Mehta." and read out the letter. The last line was, "How can we serve God unless we know Him?"

Faith in Saints' Teachings

Placing the letter away, Papa looked at those sitting in front of him, and smiled.

S : "That is a question confronting many. Without knowing God how can we love Him or serve Him?"

Papa : "One must start with faith in the words of saints and scriptures and follow their teachings. We readily believe when we hear about things and persons in the world, whom we have not seen. We talk about King George. Though he is far away in London, you believe that such a person exists and that there are people who have met him. But God is within our own hearts, nearer than anything else. So it must be easier for us to believe in His existence and love Him."

S : "It is easy to see King George. One can go to London and see him."

Papa : "Do you think it is so easy for all? Ask our sweeper Kanna if he can see King George. But he can see God."

Subramania Iyer : "S. only means that God is more difficult to be seen."

Papa : "He is the nearest to you. Why do you say it is difficult to see Him?"

52. **Precautions for Meditation** Papa (to S.) : "Justice Suryanarayana Rao has come down to Bangalore and is undergoing some treatment. Ramachandra Rao writes that he is better now."

S : "Is Ramachandra Rao not attending Mataji's birthday?"

Papa : "No, on account of Suryanarayana Rao's treatment he is held up there. Swami Ramachandrananda also cannot come. It seems he is unwell and is behaving in a queer way. Perhaps he was practising pranayama."

S : "No, Papa. He does not practise pranayama."

Papa : "Even meditation, when it is done under great strain, affects the brain. He should use some cooling things, take cold bath and purely satvic food. Otherwise he is likely to have trouble. Was he married in his purvashram?"

S : "I do not know anything about his earlier life."

September 30, 1951

53. **See Ramdas everywhere—Man is God playing the Fool** Dr. Kuppuswami was in charge of the arrangements in connection with the opening of the hospital building the next day. Papa too was busy on this account and went there in the evening and spent three hours.

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa, whenever I come here, I feel I have gained something new. That is why you are drawing me often."

Papa : "You should not depend upon the darshan of the Guru's physical body. Ramdas is in your heart and everywhere outside. You should see him there and be fully satisfied."

Swami Krishnananda : "But, I have not advanced so much as to feel your presence everywhere. Till then I should come here and have darshan of your physical body."

After the evening bhajan a large number of devotees, most of whom had come for Mataji's birthday celebration, were sitting in front of Papa in the bhajan-hall. Swami Krishnananda and V. K. Rama Menon were massaging Papa's legs.

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa, when there is no ego, does the mind exist?"

Papa : "When the ego is gone, the so-called mind too is not there."

Swami Krishnananda : "Then how does one have a thought or idea about the body?"

Papa : "Who is then thinking of the body? When the ego is gone, God alone is there and all thoughts and actions are His. Then, even sankalpas belong to God. He may make sankalpas and He may break them. So it is very difficult for others to say whether the sankalpas were made by the individual or by God through him. But he, through whom God works and makes the sankalpas, knows fully well who makes them. Mind is only a cloud that hides the sun of Truth. Man is, in fact, God playing the fool. When He chooses, He liberates Himself."

54. Vairagya and Bhakti go together— Eschew Pride in Sadhana	Swami Krishnananda : "Papa, you have written so many articles and books, and there are various other books also, by reading which one gets or cultivates vairagya. We want something, by reading which we can get intense love for God."
	Papa : "Ramdas has also written many articles which will enable one to cultivate love for God."

Papa then took his book *Divine Life*, and read out the article "Think well and think deep."

Having finished reading, Papa asked Swami Krishnananda : "What do you say about it?"

Swami Krishnananda : "Much of it deals with the dark, negative side only. The last few lines alone praise God. I do not want that which deals with vairagya alone. Love for God is more essential."

Papa : "Vairagya and bhakti go together. When you have true vairagya, naturally you develop also love for God. The more your vairagya grows, the more grows your love for God. Why are you not able to love God? Because you are still clinging to worldly objects. Your mind is running after sense-pleasures. It has no time or desire to think of God. By discrimination you know that the earthly pleasures are momentary and bring you only misery. Then you renounce them. After renunciation you are easily able to use all your mental and physical energy for realising God who is infinite Love. When you want to think of God, your mind wanders in thousand and one places. Why? Because, earthly pleasures tempt you. Their pull is so strong that you are not able to break off from them and go Godward.

"Sadhana is performed in order to keep the mind continuously in tune with God. Sadhana is to be done not merely because our scriptures prescribe them, or your guru has asked you to do so. You must do sadhana because of the intense desire in you to realise God. Then your only sadhana is that which enables you to keep your mind always in the thought of God. All other rites, rituals, worship, etc., go into the bonfire. You are prepared to sacrifice anything and everything for that supreme purpose. Indeed, no sacrifice is too great to get Him. Millions of births you will sacrifice for attaining God. Because, you know there is real joy and peace, unending happiness and bliss only in God."

Rama Menon : "How long was Papa doing such intense sadhana?"

Papa : "Ramdas's sadhana continued for three or four years. The first year he never had sleep. He was repeating Ramnam day and night. He used to lie down at night closing his eyes and be in a state of ecstasy. Though without sleep, he felt no weakness or exhaustion. He was very active and cheerful. So long as you have not attained God, you must feel like a fish out of water. You must experience such agony for God. Instead of trying to develop vairagya, many so-called sadhakas indulge in idle gossip and waste their precious time in other ways."

Rama Menon : "Can we attain vairagya by the repetition of Ramnam alone?"

Papa : "God's grace is necessary. We cannot say when and how God's grace descends on us. God is like a child. A child has some precious object. Many ask for it. The child refuses to give it. But suddenly, you see the child running after somebody and thrusting the object into his hands, though he did not care to ask for it. That is how grace comes. Nobody knows when. That is how Sri Ramakrishna explains it. When you are made to do sadhana, feel that God has chosen you and that His grace has descended on you."

Swami Krishnananda : "Is it not time, Papa, that you should do something for this fellow (the questioner)?"

Papa : "Don't be impatient. God will give you what you want in His own time. Listen to this story told by Sri Ramakrishna. 'Sage Narada was once going to Vaikuntha to see Lord Vishnu. On the way a sadhu met him and coming to know that the sage was going to see Lord Vishnu, requested Narada to ask Vishnu when he (the sadhu) would be able to realise God. Narada agreed. Proceeding further, he met another sadhu who too made the same request to him. Reaching Vaikuntha, Narada enquired of the Lord about the two sadhus. On his return, he met the first sadhu and said : 'I asked Vishnu about you. He says it will take another ten thousand years for you to realise Him.' Hearing this, the sadhu was greatly disappointed. He said, 'How cruel ! Ten thousand years ? I have done so much sadhana and still I am to wait for ten thousand years !' Narada told the second sadhu, 'Friend, I asked Vishnu about you. He said it will take two million years for you to realise Him.' At this, the second sadhu jumped with great joy, exclaiming, 'Oh, how merciful God is ! He has assured me realisation after two million years. How compassionate He is !' He felt so happy and cheerful that at that very instant God revealed Himself to him. For the sadhaka, the thought that he has done so much sadhana and austerities is itself a great obstacle. Thereby the ego, instead of disappearing, gets stronger."

Swami Krishnananda : "If one is so patient, how can he be said to be like a fish out of water ?"

Papa : "You must no doubt have the burning aspiration within, but you should not dictate terms to God. You should do intense sadhana in a spirit of humility and complete self-surrender and leave the results in the hands of God. What stands in the way is the egoistic thought, 'I have done this, and I have done that.' What is the use of human effort ? It is to know that by your effort you cannot get Him. It is not your sadhana that makes you realise God. He is the Anatha-natha, i.e., the saviour of the helpless. How can He protect you unless you really feel helpless ? He won't help you so long as you twirl your moustache in the pride of your sadhana, and think that you are a great yogi and you can look after yourself. The moment you realise you are nothing, then you become everything, because He manifests in you the moment you reduce yourself to a zero by surrendering completely to Him."

Papa continued : "What a conceited creature man is ! He feels and says he is doing this and that, throwing God into the background. Once, a man with a long nose was sleeping on the floor. Some ants were crawling nearby, and they looked at the man's long nose, which appeared to them like Mount Everest. They decided to go on an expedition to the top of this Everest and started climbing. The higher they climbed, the more they felt elated at their great feat. Finally they reached the summit and were puffed up with pride. Now, the man felt some itching sensation on his nose and with a 'huh' he brushed it with his hand. Where were the ants now ? No trace of the poor, proud ants was left ! We are only like these tiny ants."

When we are proud of our achievements God just sweeps His fingers and we are nowhere ! Does it take God long to crush proud people ?''

Swami Krishnananda : ''Papa, you said man is only God playing the fool. When He chooses to show His real form, He does so. Before God-realisation, was Papa so cheerful as now ?''

Papa : ''He then chose to play the part of an ignorant and worried man. It is He alone who is sitting here in the form of you all, posing to be ignorant ones and saying, 'I have not realised God, tell me how to cultivate bhakti. When will I realise God ?' In fact, you are all He. So when you choose to be free, you become free.'''

VII

Anandashram, October 1, 1951

55. It was Mataji's birthday. It used to be celebrated on a grand scale until last year. As all celebrations in the ashram were stopped, that too was stopped. But devotees did not stop from coming on the auspicious day. They started arriving from the previous day and the whole ashram had a festive appearance. From early morning, Mataji found herself busy in the kitchen, preparing puris for breakfast.

Around 8 a.m. Papa was seen near the dining-hall watching the devotees at breakfast. The most important function fixed for the day was the opening of the new hospital building. At 9 a.m. Papa went to the kitchen, called Mataji and proceeded to the hospital, the devotees following. Papa did the formal opening while the repetition of Ramnam was going on in full swing. There was a short bhajan programme ending with distribution of prasad. This was followed by the morning bhajan at the ashram, when the hall was packed to capacity. After bhajan, a few devotees performed pada-pooja.

In the afternoon a large number of devotees were sitting in front of Papa in the bhajan-hall. On Papa's shelf were a few copies of *Sri Ramadasa Ashtotarasata Namavali* composed and published by Srimati Hanumayamma of Madras. Papa gave a copy each to those sitting near him. S. suggested to Swami Krishnananda to read the ashtotara aloud. He agreed and recited the whole stotra. When it was completed, S. brought another note-book containing an ashtotara composed and written by hand by Srimati Ponnu Ammal of Salem. Swami Krishnananda then started reciting some of those stotras. As his voice was not good, he asked if there was anybody else in the gathering who could sing better. There was no reply. S. then said, "Perhaps, you are the best singer here now!"

Swami Krishnananda : "If Papa can give me that art, I will surely sing."

Papa : "When Ramdas himself has not got that art, how can he give it to you?"

Swami Krishnananda : "If, as you say, you have not got that art you can still recommend to Ram to give it to me."

Papa : "If Ramdas were to recommend you to Ram, he would rather ask Him to give you moksha."

Swami Krishnananda : "That will do."

S : "You say, 'that will do'?"

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa should give me at least a drop of that nectar. I am not asking for more, a drop will do."

Papa : "Nectar is not such an easy thing to secure. Nectar was got from the Kshira Sagara only after it was well churned and that too only after the Lord Himself helped in the process. So churning is really necessary before you can expect to have nectar. Churn well and leave the rest to the Lord. But you won't churn ; you want to sit quiet and at the same time taste the nectar. Now listen to this story.

"In a house there was a pot of curds kept in the kitchen. The pot was not covered. Two frogs, one big and the other small, while hopping about, fell into the pot of curds. Both of them struggled for some time to come out, but could not do so. The bigger frog gave up all hopes, kept quiet, sank to the bottom and died, drowning in the curds. The smaller frog did not want to give up easily. He struggled and struggled for hours together. He was now completely exhausted and kept quiet for some time. By the frog's struggles and his constant moving about in all directions for a long time, the curds underwent the process of churning and butter was produced. When the frog stopped struggling, the surface became still and the butter formed itself into a lump on the top. This gave a chance for the frog to come out. He got a foothold on the lump of butter and then leapt out of the pot. So Ramdas tells you that churning or struggle is essential to secure the nectar of freedom and escape from samsara.

"You should struggle hard to get God and when you are completely exhausted and cannot struggle any longer, God comes to your help. The moment you give up your struggle and surrender to Him, He takes you up and becomes your saviour. Struggle means effort to overcome obstacles. Obstacles are natural, but you have to grapple with them. By God's grace you will win and reach the goal.

"The water in the river Jamuna was poisoned by the serpent Kaliya. Lord Krishna entered the river, subdued the poisonous serpent and purified the water. The river Jamuna is the mind and the multiple heads of the serpent are the shadvikaras—kama, krodha (desire, anger), etc., which have poisoned it. If we cry to Krishna for help, He comes, tramples on the six heads of the serpent and drives it away, making the mind pure. Thereafter, we need have no more fear of the serpent which has been completely tamed by Krishna. But, unfortunately, we do not call

on Krishna to purify our mind. We feel we can deal effectively with the serpent ourselves but that can never be done. We can realise God only by His grace—not by our own efforts and initiative.”

56. Continuing, Papa said : “When you sit for meditation, do so with the spirit of complete surrender to Him. Say, ‘Oh God, I am nothing. I can do nothing by myself. You are everything.’ If you surrender to Him, He will break all your fetters and liberate you. Offer to God both dharma and adharma—both good and evil—virtue and vice. By offering these dvandvas, or pairs of opposites, at the feet of the Lord, you will go beyond them and become perfect. ‘When shall I be free?’ Only when ‘I’ ceases to be, that is when the ego disappears. Total disappearance of the ego is possible only when your surrender to God is complete. But doubt harasses you. This cloud of doubt can be dispelled only when you go beyond the pairs of opposites. To remove the ego, that is ignorance, knowledge is necessary. Finally, this knowledge also has to be transcended. Then alone you attain God in all His aspects. Because, one who has knowledge has ignorance also. That is why you are asked to go beyond both knowledge and ignorance. Removal of ignorance by knowledge is just like the removal of a thorn from your feet by another thorn. Both thorns have to be thrown away finally.

“In truth, there is no such thing as the ego. There is only the ego-sense, that is to say the false consciousness which makes you feel ‘I am separate from God’. Actually you are not separate. The ego has no reality. It is purely illusory. It is really this false sense born of ignorance that makes you think that you are separate from God. You are ever one with God. This is the truth of your existence.”

57. Swami Krishnananda : “When I am struggling hard, weeping and lamenting, the mind is greatly distressed. You now give me some hope. Now I understand the value of a guru in spiritual life.”

Guru All-Powerful Papa : “The moment you know that you have got a guru, you should feel your salvation is achieved. There is no more birth for you. For, Guru is he who dispels darkness and brings light. He is the giver of moksha. Even the avatars of God cannot give moksha to any one. If they want to do so, they should come in the form of guru. Guru alone can give you liberation. He is in this sense greater than God. There cannot be any doubt in your mind when you have truly accepted a guru, realising that he is the omnipotent and infinite power that can save you. You have to be aware of this. When you have accepted the omnipotent power as your guru, where is the room for any more doubt or egoistic struggles on your part?”

Swami Krishnananda : “Papa, I have accepted you as my Guru. Still I do not feel I am liberated. I do not know what are the signs of a liberated man.”

Papa : "If you have really accepted a guru, you won't say like this. So your acceptance is not yet real. You have not really understood your guru. His grace flows to you, but you have closed the door and do not allow it to enter. He has accepted you, but you have not accepted him. As soon as you get a guru, feel you are saved. When a child knows it is under the protection of its mother, will it be afraid of anything? It feels secure under the mother's protection. But when it is away from the mother, or even when it is near its mother, but is not aware of her presence, it will be afraid of anything and everything. If you feel the guru's protection is not on you, it means you have not found or accepted the guru. There is a song in Marathi which means : 'Guru has shown me the path. He has now made me a fakir. He has destroyed my ego-sense. He has subdued all my passions. He has given me utter freedom'."

Swami Krishnananda, pointing to one of the women devotees who had come with him, said, "Papa, this mother is worrying for nothing at all."

Papa : "It is not she alone who is worrying for nothing at all. All of you are in the same boat. You do not want to give up worries. If you have no worry at all, why do you have to feel the necessity of coming to Anandashram and meeting Ramdas? You have only to sit silent and laugh."

To this, most of the devotees present agreed and said "yes", looking at Papa with amazement.

Swami Krishnananda : "These people simply say 'yes'."

Papa : "Because they do not want to worry."

All laughed.

Swami Krishnananda : "What I am now is only what the Guru has made me."

Papa : "Then why should you have any worry at all? Say, 'I have become what He wanted me to become. I am entirely in His hands.' Some people say, 'He makes me worry also.' That cannot be true. Because God is bliss. He is Sat-Chit-Ananda. From Him no misery ever comes. Does the sun ever give darkness? Where God is, misery is not. He gives us only pure bliss."

Swami Krishnananda : "I cannot argue. Papa should know my difficulties and guide me properly."

Papa : "Ramdas understands your difficulties. He is now telling you the way to get over them. When you know that you do not know anything, then you know everything."

58.
**Nishkama
Karma**

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa, I feel I am being lifted by my Guru step by step. Still I am discontented. Why should it be so?"

Papa : "Those who drink the nectar of divine love are never satisfied until they are lost in a sea of bliss. They go on drinking and drinking, but never feel satisfied. When is the individual satisfied? When he is not there at all, that is when he is totally merged in the universal consciousness. You first long and long for God. You approach Him and have contact with Him. Still you are discontented. When you become completely one with Him, then alone all is well with you; and you have no more discontentment. You become one with God by intense longing. You should think of and meditate on Him so deeply that the sense of separation from Him completely disappears. Then alone you are really free and happy."

Dr. Alva asked Papa about selfless work, that is nishkama karma and enquired if that type of work was possible only for sannyasins.

Papa : "Are all sannyasins detached? By simply putting on the gerrua cloth one does not become detached. Completely detached work is possible only when you have realised God. Who is a happy man? He who is a devotee of God. A devotee of God is one who ceaselessly remembers Him who is happiness itself. When a man forgets Him and spends his time in worldly engagements, how can he be happy?"

Dr. Alva : "So, it is not possible for such a devotee to do worldly work."

Papa : "What is our work? Our only work here is to seek God, or do such work that will enable us to realise God. Worldly work is what makes you forget God, a work in which you have no thought of God at all. How can such a work help you in any way to attain God?"

59.
**Karma
Yoga**

Dr. Alva : "Then what about karma yoga?"

Papa : "Doing karma in a state of yoga, that is doing actions in union with God—that is karma yoga. When you are constantly in tune with God, and do your work as His servant, you are a karma yogi. Lord Krishna said to Arjuna, 'O Arjuna, whatever you do, do it for My sake—as an offering to Me.' Such an action done for God, or as an offering to Him, is selfless action. That will not allow you to sink in the whirlpool of life.

"People who work with attachment and die with desires unfulfilled are born again and again, and are not free from the cycle of births and deaths. Do not think that the world will not go on without your work. God has engaged you in work

only as His agent. If you are taken away, He will find somebody else for that work. The master of a house thinks that the whole responsibility of looking after his wife and children and other relations is on his shoulders. He also thinks if he does not work, the whole family will suffer. What happens when a general famine comes? There is no foodstuff available anywhere. The result is that the whole family starves including the master of the house. The master who had thought that he was responsible for feeding them cannot do anything now. Truly, there is only one Great Master, namely, God, who looks after all of us. We are only His instruments here. So let us all surrender ourselves to Him."

60. A lady devotee asked Papa if God could be worshipped as mother
God as by one repeating Ram-mantra.
Mother

Papa : "God can be worshipped as mother or father. In fact, the mantra stands for both the aspects. You may worship Shiva and Shakti and the one who has become both, namely, Paramashiva ; Purusha and Prakriti and also the one who has become both—the Purushottama. Ramdas worshipped God as mother and master, taking for himself the position of a child and that of a servant. If you look upon Him as mother, your attitude will be that of a child. Sri Ramakrishna maintained this relationship with God. You can worship God as mother, father, friend or master. Mataji used to address Ramdas as Guru-Mavuli, meaning Guru-Mother. She accepted Ramdas in the mother aspect. There is no sweeter relationship between God and the devotee than that of mother and child. It is the most blissful relationship. When Ramdas serves anybody, he takes the attitude of a servant of God. As a child he receives protection from God as mother and remains cheerful always. It is in the attitude of a servant that Ramdas is conducting the activities of the ashram. Mataji is often asking him, 'Why do you keep up the servant attitude? Have only the attitude of a child.' For the helpless child, surrender is the only way. Say to God, 'O Mother! I am your child. Show me whatever you wish to. Take me anywhere you like. I am entirely in your hands.' Then She does everything for you."

Swami Krishnananda : "Once we have tasted the sweetness of nectar, we are anxious to have it always. I remember Papa's words, 'God is preparing you to receive the nectar of ananda. If you get it without the proper preparation to stand it, your mind and body will be shattered to pieces!'"

Papa : "So He is gradually preparing you and when He knows you are ready to receive Him, He comes to you in all His glory."

Swami Krishnananda : "Why then should we be impatient?"

Papa : "Longing for Him means remembrance of Him. Remembrance means purification of the mind. The pain of separation from Him is definitely better than the pain you get from the world. Cry for God and God alone. Cry we must. Then why cry for worldly things?"

Swami Krishnananda : "There are many intervals and breaks."

Papa : "That is also good. You can then feel the contrast. Gradually the intervals of separation will be lessened until at last they disappear altogether and then you will experience a continuous flow of divine consciousness. Drink and drink the nectar of bliss till you become one with it."

In the evening Papa attended the various programmes arranged in the Udyog Shala for two hours in connection with Mataji's birthday celebration. In the ashram, in the evening there was bhajan and 'pradakshina round the lamp' by men and women devotees separately. When men were going round the lamp, Papa also got up and joined them for a few minutes. It was a thrilling scene.

October 2, 1951

61. Papa was in S.'s room attending to correspondence. After dictating two letters, he said, "Ramdas is not in a mood to dictate anymore today. Other letters can wait." Papa would say so when he had other important work to do. That day he wanted to be with the Trichur devotees. They were already in the bhajan-hall when Papa entered it. They prostrated at his feet and sat around him. Swami Krishnananda had a copy of *The Vision* and was reading the report about the ashram hospital. Papa asked him : "Did you go through the donors' list? What do you note there?"

Swami Krishnananda : "Malabar is most conspicuous by its absence in the list, while Bombay and Gujarat are prominent by their liberal donations."

All laughed, most of them being Malabaris.

Papa : "The devotees of Gujarat, Saurashtra and Bombay are so liberal in giving donations that a high percentage of the ashram expenses is met by them. Do you know why it is so? It is because they were indebted to the people of this place in their previous births!" The remark set the hall in a roar.

Papa continued : "But Ramdas can tell you that the devotees there do not at all grudge in making the offerings. They find joy in giving, so they give."

Papa then narrated certain incidents during his last tour. Referring to the proposed tour, he said, "This time Ramdas will be visiting Srirangam and going to

the place where he took sannyas on the banks of the Kaveri, twentyeight years ago."

Swami Krishnananda : "And also the place where Papa got the first bhiksha of two pies—tiny coins?"

Papa : "Yes, that also. He purchased plantains for the two pies from an old mother selling them. Later Ramdas could not accept any money. Once, somewhere near Bijapur, friends bought a railway ticket for him and while putting it in his pocket, thrust in also some money. Later on, it gave him no end of worry. He was repeating Ramnam, but his mind was on the money in his pocket. He asked Ram, 'O Ram, why did you put this money in his pocket?' Ram suggested that Ramdas might give the money to some beggar. Soon a beggar came and Ramdas gave him two annas. He did not feel like giving the whole lot, thinking that some more beggars might come and the remaining money could be given to them. But, unfortunately, though he was eagerly looking out for a beggar, station after station, nobody came. At last, he arrived at a station and got out of the train. Then his only thought was how to get rid of the money. He could not, of course, give it to any decent looking person. He wanted somebody who would accept it. He came out of the station and walked up to the house where he was to stay. As he neared it, he walked back again a short distance. He did not want to enter the house with the money in his pocket. He thought of throwing it away, but Ram did not permit him to do so. At last he saw a man standing at the gate of the local municipal office. He was a sweeper, Ramdas called him and gave him the paper packet containing the money, and ran away from there, lest that man should return it. Such was the worry that money gave him in those days. Now, you see, things are so different. Not only does Ramdas accept money when offered, but also asks for it, whenever necessary."

62. Papa continued : "There is a fine story about attachment to gold. **Attachment to Gold—** Listen. The saints, Machhendranath and Gorakhnath were once wandering together from place to place. Machhendranath was the **A Story** Guru and Gorakhnath the disciple. The disciple in this case was a siddha, but the Guru was not so ripe. The Guru had a bag which he would not trust anybody with, not even his disciple. He took it wherever he went, being ever cautious about its security. The disciple was surprised at the attachment his Guru had for the bag and wanted to see what it contained. But he could not easily find an opportunity. One day, by force of circumstances, the Guru had to leave the bag under the care of his disciple to answer the call of nature. Now the disciple opened the bag and saw a bar of gold in it. He said to himself, 'Ahl this gold bar is what has put my Master under bondage. I should free him from this.' So thinking, he threw away the gold bar into a well nearby. The Guru soon

came back and when he took the bag found the gold bar missing. He asked his disciple about it. The disciple replied that he had thrown the bar away. This made the Guru furious. He took a big stick and started beating Gorakhnath, who ran and ran until he got exhausted and sat down on a rock, saying, 'Let me die at the hands of my Master.' The Master continued to shower severe blows on the disciple. The latter, unable to stand any more, fell into a swoon and made water, which turned the whole mass of rock into gold! The Guru was beating him for throwing away a small bar of gold and there was a whole rock turned into gold! This opened the eyes of Machhendranath who now realised the great powers of his disciple and gave up his attachment to gold."

63. **If Women had Written Smritis** Papa added : "Do you know how the sadhus talk about money? They have a language of their own for that. They ask, 'Have you any 'maya' with you?' They call women also maya. To Sri Ramakrishna, maya was kamini-kanchana—woman and gold. Ask Mataji about men's behaviour to women. She will tell you very hard things about man. Ramdas agrees with her."

All laughed ; the women devotees present looked happier.

Papa continued : "Some of our Smritis, written by men, talk so ill of women as if only women are imperfect and men perfect. Had women written the texts, they would have revealed in glaring colours the defects of men. Most men think wrongly that women are born only to serve them. Once a man drew a picture. A lion was lying on its back and a man was sitting on its chest about to pierce it with a dagger. The artist who drew the picture was proud. He showed the picture to a lion. The lion said, 'If I were to draw the picture, it would be of a man on the ground and a lion on his body with mouth open to drink his blood! If a man falls, he falls by his own weakness. He should not blame anybody else for it.'"

Papa then went out with Mataji and a few devotees to open formally the newly built house of a worker of the ashram.

VIII

Anandashram, October 2, 1951

64. It was 1-30 in the afternoon when the Trichur devotees came to the bhajan-hall and sat in front of Papa. One of them took a fan in hand and started fanning Papa. Rama Menon was sitting just in front of Papa and Devarajan on the right. Both of them started massaging Papa's legs. Swami Krishnananda who was sitting near Devarajan requested Papa to explain how 'extremes meet' referring to Papa's *At the Feet of God*.

Extremes Meet

Papa: "God is infinite and God is eternal. Therefore God alone is real. Anything that has a beginning and end is unreal. It is only a mental projection. God cannot be divided into parts. Every part of Him is full. You say twentyfour hours make a day, calculated on the basis of the movement of the sun. In fact the sun never moves. The sun never rises and never sets. Still we base all our calculations on the sun's movements. It is all mind-made. When you go to the sun, is there any day or night? The calculation of twentyfour hours a day has no meaning there. So also about all measurement of space which is infinite. They are only illusory. Therefore the beginning and the end are the same. It is very difficult to understand. Infinity and Eternity, in which all opposites meet and lose distinction, cannot be divided into parts."

65. Papa continued: "How careful man has to be when he is on the spiritual path! He must control all his senses. He faces dangers on every side. The so-called fairest thing is the ugliest evil to him, a source of grave danger. If you go by appearances, you are doomed. There are several instances to show how we are ruined by our senses. Man is deceived by all his five indriyas. Each indriya has its own power to delude the soul. The eyes have the power of attraction. We fall a prey to the apparent beauty of the objects we see. The ears beguile us with sweet music, fine talks and so on. Touch deludes us when we come in contact with fine surface or when we touch one whom we love. We are deceived also by the sense of taste. If we get fine laddus to eat, we take one, two, three or more as they taste good, and the result is stomach-ache the next day. We see how small flies and insects are attracted by

Indriyas only Delude

light. When fire is lit, they come in thousands, fall into the fire and die. Eyes are the cause of their destruction. The bee is attracted by the smell of honey in flowers. It goes and sits on the lotus flower and drinks honey. It does not take heed when the lotus starts closing itself at sunset, and dies imprisoned in the flower. So the sense of smell destroys the bee. The hunter goes to the forest and starts singing sweet songs. The deer falls under the spell of the music and stands still, perfectly absorbed, forgetting all danger, with the result that the hunter goes to it and quietly puts a rope round its neck. Thus hearing is the cause of the deer's loss of freedom. Fish is caught because of the sense of taste. It is tempted by the bait on the hook. It comes to eat and gets caught. When a wild elephant has to be caught, a tame elephant is sent to decoy it. The latter goes and rubs its body on the wild elephant and gradually leads it into a pit when it is caught. Its enemy is the sense of touch. Animals, deceived by one or other of the five senses, bring bondage and destruction upon themselves. But man is a slave of all the five senses and so, you can imagine, what his fate is. Blessed indeed is he who uses his power of discrimination to see that he does not fall a victim to these and, by self-discipline, completely masters his senses and mind.

"When Ramdas was a boy he used to be told many ghost stories which frightened him. In later years he gradually got free from fear. In his sadhana period Ramdas found that fear was only a mental weakness. He was commanded by Ram to resort to lonely places such as graveyards, cremation-grounds, haunted houses and so on and pass nights there. Once he went to a solitary place as willed by God. When he was sitting there all alone, he suddenly heard shriek after shriek and was startled. Ramdas asked Ram, 'What is this, Ram?', to which Ram replied, 'Why should you fear? Repeat Ramnam.' Then Ramdas was all right. He was perfectly at ease. People used to frighten him about such places. But Ramnam so constantly on his lips gave him courage to face every situation bravely. He wished to see the tigers in the forest-caves and call out for them. He wanted to tell them, 'You are also Ram'."

Rama Menon : "Why did Papa risk his life?"

Papa : "Why should he not do it?"

All burst into laughter.

66. **How Ram Commands** Swami Krishnananda : "You always say that Ram commanded you to do this or that. What was the nature of the command?"

Papa : "When you have completely surrendered yourself to God, whatever comes to your mind is His command. It is He who makes you think. It is also He

who makes you talk and act. You see Ram's command in everything; in every feeling, every emotion, every movement. Now you have realised that by Ram's will alone everything happens. It is a state of consciousness, not of intellectual conviction. Once Ramdas was sitting with some friends in a house. Ram commanded that he should go away. Suddenly he got up and told his hosts, 'Ramdas is going,' and began to walk away. The hosts followed him. Ramdas went a few yards and suddenly returned. The hosts asked, 'What is the matter? Why do you return?' Ramdas replied, 'Ram first commanded Ramdas to go. Now Ram commands him to return.' Whatever Ramdas does is done by Ram's will alone."

Rama Menon : "When you went in search of tigers, what would have happened if they had pounced upon you?"

Papa : "They would not have done so. But what harm is there even if they had pounced upon Ramdas? That would also have been Ram's command."

67. **Why Critics are Friends?—** Proceeding to other topics, Papa said : "Tukaram in one of his songs says, 'O God, let my neighbours be my slanderers.' There is a deep meaning in these words. The so-called friends are your real enemies. They praise you for your good qualities. They never point out your defects. You never get a chance in their company to correct yourself. Whereas, if your neighbours are your carping critics, they will always dwell upon your shortcomings and weaknesses. Then you have a chance to mend yourself. Really they are your friends. Once Ramdas was passing through a street in Mangalore. On the road a man, who knew Ramdas before he took sannyas, directly addressed Ramdas and said, 'Oh, you are now a sannyasi! Do not become a Ravana sannyasi!' Ramdas thought, 'Ram, how wonderful you are! You came here in the form of that friend to warn Ramdas against the danger of becoming a Ravana sannyasi.' Thus Ramdas welcomed the warning and was very happy.

"There is a saying among the Sufi saints that a guru should never flatter the disciple. On the other hand, he should point out his faults whatever they are. Only then the disciple will progress. If the guru praises the disciple, the latter will certainly be ruined. A guru always wants his disciple to progress. So he scolds him for his faults and then the disciple progresses on the path.

"Before you attain God, you have to transcend all the gunas. The gunas will not take you to God. Even the best of the gunas can only direct you Godward. Here is a parable often told by Sri Ramakrishna.

"A wealthy villager who had been to the town was returning to his village. It was late in the evening and he had to pass through a forest. In the middle of the

forest three robbers attacked him. They tied him with a rope to a tree and took away the money he had. They were about to go away when one of them asked, 'Why not we kill him?' But another interfered saying, 'No, we need not kill him. Let him remain as he is, and we shall go away.' So the three went away. But a few minutes later, the third robber came back, set the man free and told him, 'Now you may go home.' The villager replied, 'You have been good enough to set me free. I wish you accompany me to my house.' The robber replied, 'No, that cannot be. I shall take you only to the outskirts of the village.' When they reached the outskirts of the village, the robber said, 'I cannot come with you any further. You see, I am, after all, a robber. If I come to the village, I shall be arrested by the police.' The three robbers in this story are the three gunas. The first one who wanted to kill the man was *tamas*. The second one who did not want to kill him, but only keep him bound, was *rajas*. The third who freed him from bondage and permitted him to go home was *satva*. Though *satva* set him free and took him out of the forest, it could not take him home. So, even the best of gunas can only help you to walk towards God. They have no admission into His presence."

68. Papa continued: "The devotee should develop the habit of throwing all burden on God. It is foolish to think that you have any responsibility. All responsibility is God's. A man got into a train with his trunk. Even after he had taken his seat he continued to keep the trunk on his head. He foolishly thought that if he did not carry the trunk himself, it would not be borne by the train. He failed to realise that the train that was carrying him would also carry his trunk. God looks after us and gives us everything necessary. Will he not take up our so-called responsibilities also? So, once you get into God's train, do not carry your burden on your head. Keep it at your side. Be sure that the train that carries you will also carry your trunk. We have to become conscious of God's protecting power always. His light is everywhere."

Rama Menon: "If His light is everywhere, why should we have to come to you?"

Papa: "That is only to realise that His light is everywhere."

It was then three o'clock. Lingappa brought coffee for Papa on a tray. Seeing him, Papa said, "Now we shall stop." He went inside the room, had his coffee and came out. The devotees were standing outside, discussing among themselves the various topics Papa had touched upon. Listening to a part of the discussion, Papa said: "Ramnam should go on within you continuously all the time—during your leisure hours, working hours, while walking, sitting, eating, bathing and even during sleep. Repetition of Ramnam during sleep will go on automatically, if you have

been repeating it all the waking hours. You go to sleep repeating Ramnam and you wake up with the repetition. Then it shows that the repetition was going on even during the sleep and that the sleep was not of the tamasic type."

Hearing the bell for the afternoon tea, Papa said, "It is time for your tea. Now go."

October 3, 1951

69. **Gopis and Jnana** Papa was sitting on his chair in the bhajan-hall after midday rest when devotees came and sat in front of him. The talk turned to gopis' love for Sri Krishna.

Papa observed: "It was the gopis' pure love for Krishna that made Him multiply Himself into as many Krishnas as there were gopis."

Swami Krishnananda: "The gopis, it is said, had no jnana. So Krishna took as many forms as there were gopis. When Krishna went from Vrindavan to Mathura, the gopis suffered agony of separation from Him. So He taught them jnana through Uddhava and said they should try to see Him in their own hearts and not outside."

Papa: "To say that the gopis had no jnana is not correct. When Uddhava asked them, 'Why do you feel Krishna's separation? Is He not within you?', the gopis answered, 'We do not want your dry philosophy. Keep it to yourself. It does not satisfy us. We want to have Krishna with us in His beautiful form. We want Him to talk with us, to play with us. We have nothing to do with your philosophy.' How can you then say that the gopis had no jnana?"

Continuing, Papa said: "Sri Ramakrishna was pining for the darshan of the Divine Mother. Sometimes he would have Her vision. When he felt separation from Her, he was disconsolate. Vivekananda on seeing his condition, once asked the Master, 'Are you different from your Mother? According to Vedanta there is only One, the Brahman. There can then really be no separation between God and His devotee. Why do you want Her darshan?' To this Sri Ramakrishna replied, 'You may keep your advaita philosophy to yourself. I will have nothing to do with it. What you say may be true according to the Upanishads, still I want to have my Mother's company'."

Adverting to gopis' love, Papa said: "Gopis' love made Krishna multiply Himself into many forms. Love is so powerful a force. Love made Krishna reveal Himself in innumerable forms to them all at the same time. Everywhere, in all forms, He is purna, full, complete in His infinity. Even in a particle, He is infinite, full. He is not a part or fraction anywhere. Everywhere He is completely manifest

with all His powers. He is at once the biggest and the smallest. In all forms of manifestations, He is in His entirety."

When Papa talked about gopis' love and the glory of God's manifestation, his face radiated a strange glow, more than usual. His enchanting smile enhanced it, and gave thrills of joy to the devotees listening to him. Rama Menon, noticing this, gave a significant look at Swami Krishnananda and whispered, "Look at Papa's face. What a strange glow!" Rama Menon was finding so much joy in Papa's talks that he seemed to feel lighter and was almost jumping from his seat. He forgot for the moment his bulky body.

70. During the talks a visitor had entered the bhajan-hall unnoticed
Ramdas— and was sitting silent in a corner. Seeing the new face, Papa asked
A Dangerous him, "Where are you coming from?" The devotee got up and
Person prostrated at Papa's feet, tears flowing from his eyes. He could
 not express himself, but simply gazed at Papa's face and uttered a
few broken words. Papa was also gazing at him intently. After a few moments,
the devotee said, "My Lord, you my Lord! How gracious you are!"

Papa : "Where are you coming from? What is your name?"

Devotee : "I am Chimanlal from Dholera. O Lord, you have changed me. You have drawn me from there to your feet."

Papa asked Chimanlal to sit down and enquired if he had had his food. Chimanlal said, "Yes", and sat down in the midst of others. Everybody was moved by the sight of Chimanlal sitting in front of Papa. They became curious to know more about him and were looking at him, when Papa remarked, "Ramnam has made him mad. See his eyes. They are full."

Swami Krishnananda (to Chimanlal) : "What made you come here?"

Chimanlal : "Some unseen power dragged me here from Saurashtra. I could not resist it. I had only three rupees with me when I started. But help came to me on the way and now I am here."

Papa : "When Ramdas was in Calcutta last, hundreds of people used to come to hear him. Mothers, young and old, assembled in the afternoon in large numbers and sat there for hours. They had locked their houses expecting to go back before their husbands returned from their offices. But they were so happy hearing the talks that they forgot all about their homes. When the husbands returned, they found their houses locked. So they came to our place and waited outside the hall. The poor chaps were hungry. But the mothers would not move till the talks were

over. The husbands at last began asking for the keys by signs. This went on for two days. On the third day, one desperate husband among them came forward and said, 'Swamiji, please excuse me, I want to tell you frankly that you are a very dangerous person. You have been here only two days, but see the confusion you have created in our households. The ladies do not wish to leave this place once they come here. They do not seem to care for their homes. What are we to do? If you go to other cities, there also you will create a similar situation. Your place is not in society, but in a cave or jungle.' Ramdas then replied quietly, "Ramdas never wanted to come to the towns. He was for long a denizen of the forest. But Ram has been of late, making him move in society for reasons best known to Him." *(Laughter)*.

"Ramdas was once in a jungle in U.P. It was a dreadful place, haunted by wild animals. Tigers used to roam about freely. Ramdas had hardly stayed there for two days, when thousands of people from the adjoining villages came there, started bhajans and kirtans and began singing, feeding and so on. The whole place then looked like a busy town. Now where can Ramdas go and hide himself?" *(Laughter)*.

"When Ramdas first came here (Ramnagar), this too was a jungle. Now you can see what it is. Ramdas did not want all these structures. They have, however, sprung up by Ram's will. Mataji often used to say that she was fed up with this ashram show and wanted to go and live in a forest. Ramdas's reply to her was, 'If we go to the forest, another ashram will rise there also. You cannot escape it. So it is better to continue here itself'."

Rama Menon : "So, if you go to jungles, they will be converted into cities."

Papa : "That is what is happening."

71. Swami Krishnananda : "What is the power of grace?"

Effect of

Grace—

Why Sadhana?

Papa : "Chimanlal will describe it to you."

Chimanlal : "How can I describe the grace of God?"

Papa : "You know the effect of grace on a person."

Chimanlal : "The effect of grace on me was that a very strong and unknown power forced me to come here. I did not know or plan anything. But I was dragged here by His will and I came like one mad. I am very happy now."

Papa (*pointing to Chimanlal*) : "His case is that of a kripa siddha. A devotee of God has sung : 'When you engage a cooly for some work and make him work

from morning till evening and then give him at the end of the day's work his wages, is it kripa shown to the cooly? He has worked hard for his wages and thus had earned it. So, Oh God, if you want me to repeat your Name and do tapas, giving up food and many other things, before you would give me your darshan, you are only a taskmaster. That is no kripa. I would then have earned your darshan by doing tapas and sadhana. I won't do anything. You should give me darshan. Then you are really a kripalu. Otherwise it is only a shop-keeping business.' Nothing that we do can make us deserve God's darshan. It is infinitely more precious than any sadhana. The devotee's attitude must be: 'O Lord, I am incapable of doing anything by myself. I look only to your grace for everything. I am nothing, O Lord, you are everything. Whatever is, is yours; whatever power exists is yours; whatever work is done, is only by your power. Thus your grace flows freely without my doing anything for it. I have nothing of my own to offer you. Everything is yours.' When you know this truth, grace flows into you. When you feel you are nothing, God makes you everything. When your mind is saturated with this feeling, your ego disappears and you become God's own. God reveals Himself to him whom He chooses."

Rama Menon : "Then why should we do sadhana at all?"

Papa : "We have to do sadhana and lead a spiritual life because it is great pleasure to lead such a life. Otherwise life is tasteless. If life is spent merely in earthly pleasures, we feel it is wasted. But, consider who makes you do sadhana. Everybody is not prompted to do sadhana. It is God Himself who by His grace makes you do sadhana to prepare you for the higher life."

It was three o'clock. Papa was about to get up for coffee, when Rama Menon said : "Papa, hearing your talks even one day is better than reading a hundred books. During these three days, you have given us enough to meditate upon for several days."

The Trichur devotees prostrated one by one as they were to leave for Trichur in the evening.

72. Tyampanna Adhikari was a devotee from Mangalore. He had
A Glorious been residing in a small house near the ashram those two years with
End his three daughters and a two-year old grandson called Dattatreya.
 Datta had been ailing for some days. He was getting worse and his
 condition was critical since the morning. Dr. Kuppaswami had been attending on
 him. It was 9-30 at night. Papa was about to retire. Adhikari came to Papa and
 informed him that the child's end was drawing near. Mataji who was resting in the
 bhajan-hall heard that and got up immediately. S. was preparing the salt gargle for

Papa. Papa called out to S.: "Don't prepare the gargle now. We are going to see the child." S. came out with a torch light and followed them.

When they reached the house, the child was crying in a low voice. His eyes were open though he hardly recognised anyone. Papa touched the boy's forehead, blessing him. S. felt thrilled at the sight. The mother of the boy, who was not normal mentally was standing there like a statue, completely unaffected by the sight. Her younger sister, the foster-mother of Datta, had been crying, and when Papa arrived, she got hold of Papa's feet and wept bitterly. Papa asked her to control herself and repeat Ramnam. She was quiet for some time, but unable to control herself, she caught hold of Papa's feet and again started weeping aloud.

Papa: "You should not weep like this. Datta has been suffering so much. Now let him be free from this suffering. He is going to Vaikuntha. He is a great soul. He came here only to keep us company. You should send him away happy. He is not born to you. Give up the moha and be brave. These physical bodies have not come to live here for ever. One day or other, every one has to pass away. Don't weep now. Repeat Ramnam."

Meanwhile, Mataji was busy attending on the child. She gave him Papa's pada-tirtha every few minutes. Dr. Kuppuswami was feeling the pulse of the boy. He reported that he was gradually sinking. Mataji's eyes were filled with tears. She did not speak. But Papa said often, "Ramdas cannot bear this." However, he was requested to sit there a few minutes longer.

It was a touching scene—the child lying on a small bed, about to breathe its last; Mataji, all love, care and affection, attending on him; the child's mother standing in the room completely unconcerned; the foster-mother in intense grief; the doctor anxiously watching the child and Papa sitting there looking at the child, blessing him with all his heart. Papa had already blessed Datta and assured that he was going to Vaikuntha.

Papa was there till 10-45. Mataji stayed on till next morning. She made everybody repeat Ramnam in which she too joined. Datta breathed his last at 1-10 a.m. What a glorious end!

IX

Anandashram, October 6, 1951

73. It was ten o'clock in the morning. Papa was waiting in the
Mend veranda of the building behind the bhajan-hall for his bath. S. was
Yourself fanning him. Chimanlal, the Saurashtra friend who had arrived
four days back, came to Papa and asked, "O Lord, what is your
command to me? Should I stay on here or should I go away? It is left to you to
decide."

Papa thought for some time and said, "What are you going to do here? You cannot do any work here due to language difficulty. So you had better go home,"

Chimanlal : "What shall I do there? All the people at home are against me. They want me to do some work, to write false accounts and so on, which I refuse. I find it difficult to stay there."

Papa : "Take up some honest work. You may join the Sarvodaya Movement or any other organisation. Or you may go to some farmer and tell him that you would work with him. Do not expect any salary to start with. You may get the bare maintenance. Otherwise you can work as a schoolmaster. You should use all your spare time for devotional practices. In any way you can make yourself useful to society. Do not criticise anybody. Do not try to mend others. First mend yourself."

Chimanlal : "O Lord, give these instructions to me in writing. I shall read them daily like *the Gita*."

Papa : "Why in writing? These are all the instructions. You are not simply to read them. You have to put them into practice."

Chimanlal : "When shall I go then?"

Papa : "You have come all the way from Saurashtra. Stay for another week and then go. What day is it today? It is Saturday. You may go next Saturday."

October 8, 1951

74. In the afternoon Papa started reading *the Gospel of Sri Rama-Ramdas of krishna*. D. S. Sastry of Madras, Dayanand, Natverlal Shah, Bhadrachalam Srikant Rao, Subramania Iyer and S. were listening. At three o' clock Papa stopped reading and went for coffee. After coffee he came back and sat down with the devotees. There was silence for a short while, which was broken by Papa himself.

He said, "In God-consciousness one is always in divine ecstasy."

Again there was silence for a few minutes.

Sastry : "Swamiji, have you been to Bhadradri?"

Papa : "Which place do you mean?"

Sastry : "Bhadradri, Bhadrachalam, the place of the famous Bhakta Ramdas."

Papa : "No. Ramdas has not visited that place."

Sastry : "As the story goes, Bhadrachalam Ramdas was employed under the Nizam of Hyderabad as a tahsildar in a place about a hundred miles from Bhadrachalam. A party of devotees bound for Bhadradri were once passing through his place. The tahsildar happened to meet them and on hearing that they were going to Bhadradri for darshan of Lord Rama, he immediately started with them. The other devotees asked him why he was starting without any preparation and without giving any intimation to his family. The tahsildar replied that to go to Bhadradri for Ram's darshan did not need any preparation and that Lord Rama would look after everything and see to his needs. Afterwards he was mad after Ram, though he continued in his job. He was later known as Ramdas. Once he found the temple building was in need of repair, and he carried out all the repairs taking the necessary money from the government treasury in his charge. When the time came for remitting the treasury money to the Nizam, there was no cash left. The matter was brought before the Nizam who ordered that the tahsildar should be sentenced to death if the money was not repaid within seven days. Meanwhile, he was put in prison. Six days passed. His guru came to him and asked him to apologise to the Nizam and beg for pardon so that he might be saved. Ramdas replied, 'The money was spent for repairing Ram's temple and now it is up to Ram to see the money is paid. If He is not going to do it, I am prepared to die.'

"On the seventh night, Ram sent Lakshman in the form of a sepoy to the Nizam. The sepoy (Lakshman) informed the Nizam that he had come to pay off the money due from Ramdas and wanted a receipt for the same. The Nizam took the

money and gave a receipt. The receipt was then, in a mysterious way, thrown into the cell where Ramdas was imprisoned. The Nizam got up next morning and ordered the release of Ramdas."

75. **Damaji of Mangalwada** Papa : "This story resembles the story of Damaji. Under the Nawab of Bijapur there was a revenue officer in charge of the Mangalwada taluka. His name was Damaji. He was a great bhakta of Vithoba. In those days taxes and rents from landowners were collected by the village officers in kind, that is in the form of rice and wheat, and stored in a godown. So the godown at Mangalwada was full of grain, collected as taxes and rent. There was a great famine in the taluka and people were starving. They came to Damaji for help. He gave whatever he had and finally distributed all the grain from the government godowns to the starving people. The head-clerk was jealous of Damaji and thought that if Damaji were removed from his position, he would get a chance to take his place. So he sent information to the Nawab of Bijapur that Damaji had distributed all the government grain to the people. On hearing the news, the Nawab sent his men to arrest and bring Damaji to him. When the sepoy reached Mangalwada, Damaji was performing a harikatha. The sepoy interrupted it and wanted Damaji to follow them. Damaji told his people that he had to go to the Nawab as he was summoned there, and left. By this time Vithoba got ready to come to the rescue of Damaji. Vithoba took the form of a pariah, went to the Nawab and said, 'I am the servant of Damaji of Mangalwada. He has sent through me the money to cover the value of grain due to you as taxes and rents.' The Nawab replied, 'That will amount to lakhs of rupees. How are you going to pay it? Where have you got the money?' The pariah said, 'I have got it here. You may take the money from this.' So saying he handed over to the Nawab a small bag. The Nawab emptied it and got the money counted. It contained the exact amount due from Damaji. The Nawab then gave the pariah a receipt for the money.

"The Nawab was fascinated by the strange pariah with his lustrous eyes, radiant face and attractive features. When asked to give his name, he said, 'I am only a poor servant of Damaji. My name is Vithoomahar,' and disappeared. The Nawab was simply mad after Vithoomahar. He ran about here and there to find the pariah, but nowhere could he be found. The Nawab refused to take food and drink until he met the pariah again. Two or three days passed. Now the sepoy brought Damaji before the Nawab. The Nawab was surprised on seeing Damaji and asked : 'Why have you come? There is no charge against you. The money due to me has been paid by you three days ago. Your servant Vithoomahar came and paid it. I want to see your servant again. Where is he?'

Damaji : 'I have not paid you the money. I have no servant named Vithoomahar.'

Nawab : 'How can it be ? He has paid in cash all the money—the full value of the corn—and I have given him a receipt also.'

Damaji was astonished to hear this. He had a copy of *Bhagavad Gita* in his hand. A small piece of paper was protruding from it. The Nawab asked what that was. Damaji took it out and found to his surprise that it was the receipt, the one given by the Nawab to Vithoomahar.

Nawab : 'You said you did not know about Vithoomahar. He has handed over the receipt to you. So you surely know about him. Otherwise how could he have handed over the receipt to you ?'

Damaji was greatly perplexed and did not know what he was to say.

Nawab : 'Now I want to see Vithoomahar. You must show him to me.'

Damaji : 'Oh Lord, you have saved me from one trouble and put me into another. The Nawab wants to see Vithoomahar. How can I show him whom I have myself not seen ?'

Damaji then took the Nawab to Pandharpur for darshan of Vithoba. Both of them stood in front of the deity.

Nawab : 'I do not want to see the stone idol. I want to see Vithoomahar. You should show him to me.'

"Immediately Lord Vithoba revealed Himself to both of them in the form of Vithoomahar. The pariah who handed over the money to the Nawab was standing in front of them in place of the stone image. Thus the Lord saved His devotee and gave darshan to the Nawab also. The samadhi of Damaji and that of the Nawab are side by side in Mangalwada."

76. Sastry : 'Is it possible to believe. Swamiji, that God kept the
God Beyond receipt in *the Gita* book without Damaji's knowledge ?'
Reasoning

Papa : "Why not ? God can do anything. He is almighty. In the story of Bhadrachalam Ramdas you yourself said that God threw the receipt into the prison."

Sastry : "We can believe about visions and all that ; they are pure mental conceptions. But such tangible things like receipts are different. They cannot be reasoned out."

Papa : "Yes, God is beyond reasoning. He is almighty. We cannot say what He will do and what He will not. There are people who have seen, talked to and

touched God as we touch people and objects round about us—not in vision or dreams. Everything is possible for God. When somebody asked Sri Ramakrishna if he had seen God, he replied that he saw God more intensely than he saw anything else.”

Sastry : “Generally it is understood that God gives darshan in the form on which the devotee concentrates.”

Papa : “Yes. That is correct. Because he wants to see God only in that form.”

October 9, 1951

77. D. S. Sastry and his wife were returning to Madras by the
The best morning Mail. He wanted to have a talk with Papa before he left.
Advice to S. informed Papa about it. Papa came and sat on an asan on the
Householders cement bench outside, in front of the ashram. Sastry sat near Papa.
 His wife kept standing.

Sastry : “Our stay here has been very, very happy. What we wanted was a peaceful and holy atmosphere. This ashram has it. So my pooja holidays have been well spent here.”

Sastry also told Papa how they were devoted to Sri Ramana Maharshi. He narrated some of his experiences in which he clearly saw Ramana’s grace working. He now got up from his seat and sat in front of Papa. His wife also sat by his side.

Sastry : “We are daily getting up at 4 or 4-30 in the morning. We finish our bath and sit for prayers and meditation for an hour or so. In addition, any leisure time available we devote to God. Twice a week, a pundit is reading and explaining *Srimad Bhagavatam* for a few of us. That is all we are able to do.”

Two sadhus who then came were being taken to the Dharmashala by the gate-keeper. Pointing to them, Papa said : “Ramdas was once wandering about like this, but without the bundles and other things. Often he had not even a water vessel with him.”

Sastry : “My wife was reading the other day the Telugu translation of your book *In Quest of God*. She was much impressed by the scene in which the ticket collector came and asked you to clear out as you had no ticket.”

Continuing, Sastry said, “Swamiji, I am fiftytwo years old. I am seriously thinking of retiring. But I am afraid I may not be able to make full use of the time after retirement. What am I to do?”

Papa : "You had better continue in service. When you retire you should be able to use all your time for devotional practices. Many people are not able to do that. So they go in for some other work. You should keep on working till you get the call to change or renounce it. There is no harm in doing official work. The most important thing is that you should remember God. Remember Him even while engaged in work."

Sastry : "Swamiji, it is very difficult to remember God always. It is not easy to be engaged in work and at the same time feel that God alone is doing it."

Papa : "The best advice for householders is as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa would have it : 'Keep one hand firmly at the feet of the Lord and do the work with the other hand. When the work is over, place both the hands at His feet'."

Sastry : "During work we often forget God, Swamiji."

Papa : "A great devotee says, 'Remembrance is God. Forgetfulness is also God.' He feels that each and every idea and emotion is God. For such a one there is nothing but God. God and God alone is. When there is remembrance of God, it is quite natural to have also forgetfulness of Him. So one has to go beyond both. Of course, before one reaches this high stage, forgetfulness gives intense pain."

The taxi arrived and it was time for them to start. They both prostrated at Papa's feet and, bowing to others present, got into the taxi.

It was about 3-15 p.m. Papa was returning to the bhajan-hall from the kitchen. S. was with him. Hearing someone reading aloud, Papa asked S., "What is he reading?"

S : "He generally reads *Tulsidas Ramayan*."

Papa : "Does he read alone, or is there anybody else to hear it?"

S : "I think he reads alone."

Papa : "Some people daily do parayana (recital of scriptures) and feel that they are earning a lot of punya (merit) by that. But they do not care to follow the teachings contained in those scriptures."

October 11, 1951

78.
**Cause of
Man's Fall**

It was 8-30 a.m. S. was coming out of the bhajan-hall to see where Papa had gone. In a few minutes, he saw Papa and Mataji standing near the gate. A woman worker was also standing in front of them. When S. went near, he heard Papa and Mataji severely

reproving her for some misconduct. They had reasons to suspect her, and the previous day her misconduct was proved. So she was finally asked to leave the ashram.

Papa returned to the bhajan-hall, and Mataji to the kitchen. In the hall, Papa and S. were alone. Referring to the incident, Papa remarked to S. : "We have been trying to avoid such unpleasant things ; but the work is such that girls and young men have to be put together during the day, and now for some days this girl was working alone with the man who is involved. Ramdas had suspicions about her and wanted to send her away ; but he was hesitating to send her out on mere suspicion."

S : "Such women spoil young men. However much the latter may try to avoid them, they are caught."

Papa : "Yes, that is natural ; woman and gold cause man's fall."

Mataji had by this time come to the bhajan-hall. Hearing Papa say that woman and gold cause the fall of man, she observed : "Papa, instead of 'woman and gold' you may say 'lust and gold'. That is more correct and appropriate."

Papa : "Yes, it is applicable to both men and women. Why should we blame women alone ? Men are equally responsible for women's fall."

C. Ramachandra Rao, a devotee from Bangalore, who had been in the ashram for some time, came and sat facing Papa.

Papa continued : "To be free from lust, man should look upon all women, even his wife, as his mother. He should start this practice with his wife, otherwise he will not be able to see other women as mother."

79. Morning bhajan was over and a few devotees were talking in the
Mind, bhajan-hall awaiting the ringing of the lunch-bell. Govindan Nair,
A Wild Bull a devotee from Tellicherry, had arrived only a few minutes back.
While talking to him, Papa said, "Yes, it is the nature of the mind to wander here and there. It is like a wild bull. We have to pull it by its nose-ring to control it. The mind can be controlled only by steady and long practice. By the repetition of Ramnam the mind gradually gets purified and loses its taste for the things of the world. It then finds the Name sweet and desires to get more and more absorbed in it. So repeat Ramnam with intense devotion."

Just then the bell rang. The devotees went to the dining-hall. Papa too sat down for lunch.

After lunch Papa was sitting on his asan and was about to go for his midday rest. It was raining. Natverlal Shah and S. were standing by his side. Noticing two persons entering the compound and coming towards the ashram, Papa asked, "Who are those Rams, can you make out?" By that time they had come near. S. said : "They are devotees from Trichur."

The two devotees entered and prostrated before Papa. One of them, R. Vanchiswara Iyer, said, "Today is my birthday. So I decided to come for your darshan." Papa said, "It is very good."

The other devotee handed over to Papa half a dozen hand-fans, saying, "These are sent to you by Devarajan."

Papa received them and said : "Yes, very good. Now go ; have your bath. That is the first thing you should do on your birthday. Then go for meal."

Vanchiswara Iyer then asked S. when he could perform pada-pooja to Papa.

S. (*after consulting Papa*) : "You can perform pada-pooja in the afternoon at 1-30. Papa will be free then. We shall keep the necessary things ready for you."

The devotees were then taken to their rooms.

In the afternoon they performed pada-pooja. At the close of the function Vanchiswara Iyer stood before Papa with folded hands and said, "As you advised me, I have resigned my job so that I may devote all my time to devotional practices. Swamiji, progress is still very slow. Now please infuse some grace into me so that I may progress quickly."

Papa (*gazing into his eyes*) : "Go on with the repetition of Ramnam more and more intensely. You will have progress."

80. Concentrate on the Sound of Ramnam in Solitude	C. Ramachandra Rao, Swami Ramachandrananda, Govindan Nair, Dayanand, Natverlal Shah, Subramania Iyer, Srikant Rao and a few others were sitting in front of Papa, to listen to his reading of <i>the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna</i> .
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Before the reading, Swami Ramachandrananda asked Papa, "Will you please explain to me about concentration of mind on the sound of the mantra?"

Papa : "You have to repeat Ramnam aloud in a solitary place and concentrate your mind on the sound. It is essential that you should practise this in solitude. Any external sound will be a disturbance. By intense practice, the moment the

Name is repeated, your mind will get completely absorbed in the sound, and become still. It is now in a state of ecstasy. You are above the body-consciousness. You may remain in ecstasy for some hours. When you come out of it and regain normal consciousness, you see light, peace and bliss everywhere."

Swami Ramachandrananda : "Can we have this practice all the twentyfour hours of the day?"

Papa : "You can have it if you have intense vairagya and great love for the Name besides a keen desire for raising yourself up. For one year Ramdas was repeating Ramnam day and night, without sleep. Sometimes, he used to remain still in a state of ecstasy for hours. When the mind became slightly disturbed, Ramnam would automatically start and continue till the mind again got absorbed in it. In those days, when Ramdas attended bhajan, he used to sit with his eyes closed, and his mind had become so sensitive to the sound of music that the moment it was heard, he would fall into a trance."

Swami Ramachandrananda : "Should we keep the eyes open or closed? When we close the eyes we get sleep. Is satvic food also necessary?"

Papa : "You can either close the eyes or keep them open. If you feel sleepy, you may have to keep them open. Satvic food is also essential. Rajasic food makes the mind restless and tamasic food or excess of food makes it dull or sleepy. The mind then refuses to listen to the sound of the Name. Ramnam alone is sufficient to take you to the goal. If you take Ramnam always you will not have to sit and exert to make the mind still. By the repetition of Ramnam the mind gets absorbed in the sound of the Name and enters into a superconscious state. Bhaktas do not have to practise meditation. It is only jnanis who have to meditate. Narada, Tukaram, Chaitanya and such other bhaktas never sat for meditation as such. The very sound of God's name raised their mind to a superconscious state and then they were perfectly unconscious of the world. If you continue with devotion the repetition of Ramnam you will find in due course that the moment you sit still, the mind is also still and you have not to struggle at all.

"Merely sitting, with closed eyes and trying to meditate, does not take you anywhere. You may be sitting motionless, but your mind may be wandering in thousand and one places. There was a friend here who used to sit absolutely motionless during bhajans. If his mind was really still, he would have become a siddha long ago. Ramdas does not know whether he was sleeping or in samadhi. But one thing was certain, he used to get up and run to the dining-hall immediately the bell rang for meal. If he was in samadhi he would not have heard the bell. Some people can sleep in a sitting posture !

Those who have attained siddhi through the repetition of mantra are known as mantra siddhas."

S: "Papa said that loud repetition of Ramnam was necessary. Is it not enough if we concentrate on the sound vibration during the mental repetition of the mantra?"

Papa: "Loud repetition will gradually lead to mental repetition. In mental repetition you can hear the mantra very clearly, though there is no sound produced outside."

Papa then started reading from *the Gospel*.

81. After the evening bhajan, Papa was sitting with a few devotees
God's Will is in front. S. brought the day's letters for signature. Signing the
Supreme last one, Papa read a few lines from it: "God's will alone is
 supreme. We should not forget this fact even for a moment. It is
then alone that we become His blissful and illumined children."

Then, raising his head and looking at the devotees with a smile, Papa said, "His will is supreme. If we are conscious of this always there is no struggle at all. When we surrender to God's will, we put all our burdens on Him. Let Him carry everything. Surrender means strength, peace, bliss, and wisdom. When the ego raises its head, all these disappear and you become a puny care-worn creature. Otherwise you are a blissful being."

X

Anandashram, October 13, 1951

82. It was about 9-30 a.m. Papa was sitting on the cement bench in front of the ashram. Ramachandra Rao and Swami Ramachandrananda were standing close to him and S. was holding an umbrella. Swami Ramachandrananda had asked Papa to clear some doubts.

Be unaffected by Prarabdha—Purpose of Sadhana

Looking at him, Papa said : “You should not be afraid of prarabdha. You should face it bravely. A jnani faces prarabdha by asserting अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ‘I am Brahman’, and considering the whole world as mithya—unreal. Even his body is not real for him. He is not affected by anything, not even by any physical suffering. A bhakta, however, accepts everything as God. Any suffering caused by prarabdha, he takes as a gift of God. He believes that everything happens by God’s will alone. He has nothing to reject. So both the jnani and the bhakta are unaffected by suffering. Their effort is to cross the ocean of samsara and attain immortality.”

Swami Ramachandrananda : “What is the meaning of samsara ?”

Papa : “One’s attachment to the body, wife, children, relations, possessions, and so forth, constitutes samsara. One, who is immersed in samsara, has to perform intense sadhana to get out of it. One who has no attachment to woman and wealth needs only very little sadhana to attain the goal. One who grows up in a pure atmosphere is not inclined to get into the whirlpool of samsara and therefore finds his way out easily. Suppose a child grows in the company of a saint and there is nobody else to infuse worldly thoughts into its mind; the child grows up like the saint himself—like a beautiful flower. It is continued association with the world that makes us impure. We imbibe so many impure vasanas that intense sadhana alone can erase them. The purpose of sadhana is only to undo the harmful effects of mundane thoughts and impressions. Now listen to a story.

83. “In a forest lived a great tapaswin. His wife was a highly evolved soul. She passed away leaving her only daughter behind. The daughter grew up in all innocence and purity. Her father was getting old. She used to seat him in a jhula and swing it to and fro. She was guileless, pure and free like a child. One day a Raja who

Detachment—A Queen’s Example

happened to pass that way saw the young girl in the company of her old father. The Raja was a bachelor and had declined to marry so far, though he had many offers. Seeing this girl, he told his minister that if at all he married, he would marry her only. So they went and asked the tapaswin if he would be willing to give his daughter in marriage to the Raja. The old hermit replied: 'I have absolutely no objection if she agrees. You may approach her and get her consent.'

"They then asked the girl. She replied: 'I have no objection. But there are two conditions to be fulfilled. First you should engage somebody here to look after my old father. Secondly I will bring with me the clothes that I am wearing now and I should be permitted to spend one hour daily in a solitary room in the palace where I will put on these clothes.' The king agreed.

"The marriage was duly performed and the girl cheerfully left her father and carried on the duties of the queen very happily in the kingdom. She was very loving and compassionate to everyone. According to her vow she was spending daily an hour in a lonely room, wearing her simple forest-dress. In course of time a girl was born to her. Unfortunately, the subjects felt that their king had married some forest-girl and so they would not allow her children to inherit the throne. They requested the king to get the child killed. The king conveyed this tragic news to the queen. She cheerfully agreed to give up the child. The child was then handed over to two men who were instructed to take it to a jungle and kill it. They took the child to the forest, but its beauty and innocence prompted them to leave it there alive. They falsely reported to the king that they had killed it. This child was soon taken away by another king who chanced to pass that way.

"Two years later a son was born to the queen. Again the subjects agitated that the son should be killed. The queen readily gave up this child also. The men who were commissioned to kill it, left it alive in the forest as before and reported to the king that they had killed the child. It so happened that this child was also found and taken away by the same king who took the first baby girl. After some time another daughter was born to the queen, which went the way of the earlier two. Providentially, this third child also was found in the forest by the same king who had taken away the first two children. The three children were growing up fine under the loving care of the king and the queen who were childless.

"Now the subjects requested the king—father of the children—to send the queen back to the forest and marry another princess, as they thought there was no use having a queen whose children were unfit for the throne. The king told the queen about this. She cheerfully fell in with the idea and went back to her father and started as before to serve him, swinging him in the jhula. She was as cheerful as ever. She had no regrets, because she took all that happened in such a detached spirit that life was, to her, nothing short of a dream.

"Some years passed. The king, who sent back his queen to the forest, decided to marry the daughter of the king of the neighbouring state. The marriage was settled. As there was no female member in the palace, there was none to make the marriage preparations. The subjects requested the king to send for the former queen, and ask her to arrange everything for the king's wedding. They all knew that the former queen was very clever at managing all such affairs. The king sent messengers to the forest to call her. She came cheerfully and supervised her husband's second marriage.

"Before the function commenced, however, the father of the bride told the king in the presence of the assembly: 'I wish to tell you some details of my family before the marriage takes place. These three children, of whom you are going to marry the eldest, are not really mine. I found them all one by one in the forest. I took them to my kingdom and brought them up.'

"Now the king—bridegroom—suspected that the bride was perhaps his own daughter and that the other two were also his children. He sent for the two men who were ordered to kill them. On questioning, they confessed they did not kill the children and begged to be pardoned. After careful enquiries he was convinced that they were his own children by the first queen. He could not marry his own daughter. So the marriage was cancelled. All were pleased with the result. The people of the kingdom highly appreciated the good and lofty qualities of the queen who cheerfully passed through the severe trials that befell her. They then prayed that she should not go back to the forest, but should remain in the palace as the queen. She joyfully agreed to the proposal."

Papa continued: "Ramdas told you this story to show how detached the queen was while living and moving in the world. That was because she was brought up in her most impressionable age by a saint, in an atmosphere far away from worldly distractions. So she had developed detachment from worldly pleasures and position."

84. It was time for Papa's bath. Papa went to the building behind
Samsara the bhajan-hall. S. brought a seat on which Papa sat. S. was
hard to fanning him. Breaking the few minutes' silence, Papa said, "One
overcome who is caught in samsara is doomed. What a hard struggle it is to
 get out of it! Ramdas had been in it and he knows how much he
 had to suffer and struggle to free himself from its coils. Even though one separates
 oneself physically, it is very difficult to take the mind away from the old rut. It
 drags you down. Ramdas had to do intense sadhana to free himself from all
 attachments. He used to consider the world like a passing show."

S : "When did the struggle cease?"

Papa : "The struggle finally ceased only a few years after he came to this ashram."

S (*with great surprise*) : "What! It took so many years! Did you not feel calm and peaceful when you were repeating Ramnam intensely day and night? Were you not free from those attachments then?"

Papa : "No. There were occasionally some disturbances. Even a slight irregularity in diet used to disturb the mind. While in the Kadri cave, once Ramdas ate some food which was not well cooked. That produced stomach trouble which in turn disturbed the mind. So, whenever there was mental disturbance, he used to go into solitude and observe fast for one or two days. That helped him much."

S : "What was Papa's practice to remain unaffected by the worldly whirlpool? Was it by detaching your real Self from the body and asserting that your real nature is bliss, or did Papa resort to other means?"

Papa : "It was by looking at everything as Ram and every incident that happened as brought about by Ram."

November 4, 1951

85. 3-30 p.m. Papa came out from the bhajan-hall. A few local
A New Path to Realisation— Mataji's Wish visitors were with him. The whole group came near the cement bench and stood there for a while. The local devotees took their leave of Papa. Then some of the ashram inmates, who were standing behind, joined him and all went out for a walk. The group consisted of Dayanand, Chandrasekharan, Ramkishor, S. and a couple of others. They were almost near the gate when S. asked Papa, "May I bring Papa's walking stick?" Papa said, "Yes, that would be fine."

S. then went back to the bhajan-hall and returned with the walking stick. The party walked to the main road and turned east. It was a very beautiful scenery all around—the narrow road with many curves, through the maidan full of green grass, looked like the red border of a green velvet shawl unevenly folded. On the right side was the beautiful Manjapati hill and on the left the ever-green valley. Turning to the rear one could see the vast sunlit expanse of the Arabian Sea.

The party was walking slowly.

Papa (*to S.*) : "Do you know Mataji has brought an important proposition before Ramdas? She has been discussing it with Ramdas. She wants him to chalk out a new path for the devotees to attain God-realisation. They should remain where they are, carrying on their normal activities. Ramdas should see that they all advance on

the spiritual path. It must be entirely a new path as she does not like the old way of renouncing and running away to solitude. Some reject the world for a while and spend their time in solitude. After getting established in the Reality and realising the world as the very manifestation of that Reality, they return to it. Then their vision is completely changed. Mataji does not want even this temporary isolation from the world. According to her, in every way the sadhaka should lead a normal life, and at the same time the inner transformation should take place. The sadhaka alone should know and feel for himself the inner freedom and peace. Of course, those who move with him closely may get an inkling of it. How do you like it?"

S : "Whether one realises while living in the family or after running away from it, what does it matter as long as the realisation is there?"

Papa : "No, the question is about the path. Mataji wants that the householder, both during his sadhana and after realisation, should bring about no external change of any type."

S : "Is there any instance of such a type?"

Papa : "Instance or no instance, she wants Ramdas to cut out this new path."

S : "What does Papa say about it?"

Papa : "Ramdas replied to her in such a way that she could not speak further. Ramdas told her that there are certain conditions laid down for God-realisation, most important of them being tyaga and sadhana. One has to fulfil these conditions. If a woman wants a baby it is absolutely necessary that she should get pregnant, pass through the duration of pregnancy and then deliver. As pregnancy is a necessary condition for child-birth, even so tyaga and sadhana are the important conditions for God-realisation. She did not argue."

86. S : "Papa, though you renounced everything and became a
Why Sannyas sannyasi, why is it that you ask most of your devotees to remain
not Advised householders?"

Papa : "Because, Ramdas finds that in the case of all, except a few, they are not prepared to give up everything. Though for the moment they might be saying that they would renounce, they won't be able to hold on for long. So it is better for them to remain as householders till their minds cannot think of anything but God. At this stage they will themselves run away from their homes or, even if they remain there, they would become useless for the household life and invariably unwanted by the relatives, as they will prove more a burden to them than any help. They would then be toiling for the good of people in general who are in distress."

Then Papa turned from the road to the left and walked through the maidan wishing to sit for some time on one of the rocks a few yards away. In a few minutes all were sitting on a rock.

87. S : "Whatever the path, what we want is a quicker progress.
Ask God to The very sight of you should bring about the transformation in
Transform the aspirants. All their vasanas should be burnt completely."
You

Papa : "Do you mean to say Ramdas should be something like a fire which will burn away all the vasanas of the devotees who approach him?"

S : "Yes, exactly so. Then it is immaterial whether the devotee is a householder or not. He sees you and is transformed. There is no question of his lack of progress. Now, if we say that we are not progressing, your answer invariably is that we should have more faith and devotion, and that our aspiration for God is not strong enough, and so on. This is not what we expect. When a sadhaka comes to you, he expects you to remove all his dirt and give him the necessary strength to go forward and reach the goal."

Papa : "By putting the blame on the disciple, the guru admits that he is either unwilling to give the necessary strength to the disciple or he is not powerful enough to help him."

There was an outburst of laughter.

S : "That is how you escape. We cannot win in any argument with you."

Papa : "God can do anything if He wills. He is almighty. He is not bound by rules and regulations. He wills and things happen."

S : "Why don't you will then?"

Papa : "You should ask Ram to do it. What is Ramdas after all ? Why does Mataji herself not do what she wants Ramdas to do?"

S : "She has left everything in Papa's hands. She wants Papa to do everything."

Papa : "What do you mean by 'Papa'?"

S : "'Papa' means the almighty Lord working through this body"— (*pointing to Papa's body*).

Papa : "Yes, it means you have to ask the almighty Lord to give you the strength."

S : "We ask you, that is enough. Asking you is asking Him. If not, why should people come to see you ?"

Papa : "They come to see Ramdas because they have silently asked Ram to do something for them and Ram does it for them through Ramdas."

88. **Short-lived Experience** It was getting late then and Papa said that the party might return to the ashram. On the way back, reverting to the same topic, Papa said, "By the sight or touch of a saint some people get some high spiritual experience. It remains with them for some time. They think they have attained everything. They feel the presence of God everywhere and always enjoy bliss. But this experience gradually fades away and to their utter disappointment they find they are their old selves again. Some experienced this by Ramdas's contact. But they lost everything after some time."

S : "That must be terrible indeed. But they will now engage themselves in severe sadhana to regain the state they have found and lost."

Papa : "Their disappointment is indeed very great. Their experience was brought about by some peculiar combination. Now they strive their best to create this combination, but they do not succeed. They get so dejected that they lose all hope."

S : "It is like making one a king for a time and then throwing one out into the streets as a beggar."

Papa : "It is like that. How can one stand it ?"

S : "Can inner awareness be maintained even during sleep before one attains nirvikalpa samadhi ?"

Papa : "Yes, it is possible. But it is not real sleep then. You can call it half sleep. At this time the sadhaka takes very little food. He lives on a very small quantity of milk and fruits."

S : "Is his body affected by want of regular sleep ?"

Papa : "No, the body does not on that account feel any fatigue at all. This is true only in the case of a true and earnest sadhaka."

XI

Anandashram, January 5, 1953

89. The usual reading of *Tulsidas Ramayan* was over at 9 p.m. Papa
Writing and then signed the Likhit Japa notebooks of the devotees. He went
Talking, to bed a few minutes before 10. Motiben and S. were massaging
Nothing his body and Swami Krishnananda was gently fanning him. Mataji
before was sitting in the adjacent room, near Ramkishor, who was laid up
Realization with an attack of fever.

Remembering what he read a few minutes back in *the Ramayan* about Sri Narada cursing Lord Vishnu, Papa laughed.

S: "What is the cause given by Vishnu for taking the avatar of Rama?"

Papa: "People in the world were suffering at the hands of the wicked. So they prayed to God for help. Papa then repeated the sloka :

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

'For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.'

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa is quoting Sanskrit slokas !"

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas sometimes quotes Sanskrit slokas like a learned pundit. Whenever he quotes a sloka, he also says that Ramdas does not know Sanskrit, but people do not seem to believe it."

S : "When Papa says so, all the more they believe that Papa knows Sanskrit well."

Papa : "Yes, what Ramdas does not want them to believe, they believe. Ramdas's *Gita Sandesh* was sent to *The Hindu* for review some years ago and a long review of the book appeared praising the way Ramdas has dealt with the subject in each chapter. Reading the review, Ramdas himself wondered and read

the book twice to find out if there was really so much to appreciate. When he read once, he thought there was something in it, but when he read it again he felt that the whole thing was stale."

S: "If Papa writes the book now, how would he write it?"

Papa: "Ramdas would never write it at all. Sometimes he wishes to destroy all the books he has written. He asks himself, 'What is there to write or talk? When Ramdas sees everybody as the very embodiment of God, whom can he teach or advise? Seeing God everywhere is a matter of experience. How to write about it? That is why Ramdas nowadays does not wish to talk or write anything about it. Just before Swami Vivekananda attained mahasamadhi, he was asked to give a message to his devotees. His reply was that he would like all the books written by him or published in his name to be collected and thrown into the sea. Kabir also said the same thing."

January 6, 1953

90. 4 p.m. Papa was in the bhajan-hall. It was time to start the
Mataji's reading of *Tulsidas Ramayan*. The book was placed on the cross
Unexpected plank of his chair.
Entreaty

Papa (to S.): "This plank should be pushed forward to the utmost. Otherwise the heavy book presses on Ramdas's stomach. Ramdas's body has become unwieldy." S. then remarked that the book too was bulky.

Papa: "Both are unwieldy—Ramdas and the book; but the contents of the book are very good and are liked by everybody." (Laughter).

Just then more devotees came and took their seats. When Mataji also sat in front of Papa, he repeated the above to her in Konkani. Before he started the second half of the sentence, she said, "I am also unwieldy." Papa said, "No, no. Hear what Ramdas has to say", and completed the sentence.

Mataji laughed and said, "We like not only the contents, but also the body of both."

Then *the Ramayan* was read as usual.

When the evening bhajan was going on, Swami Krishnananda and S. were in the office. Mataji came there and asked some details from Swami Krishnananda. She then handed over a fountain pen to Swami Krishnananda and asked him to pass it on to Subramania Iyer. In a few minutes Subramania Iyer himself came in. Swami

Krishnananda gave the fountain pen to him saying, "This is for you with Mataji's blessings."

Subramania Iyer : "Then I shall have Mataji's blessings personally." Saying this he prostrated at Mataji's feet.

Mataji looked at him and said, "Let me have the blessings. You are wearing out under the weight of the blessings you have been getting from me all these twentytwo years. Now at least, let me grow fat by taking all your blessings."

Those present were surprised and upset at this attitude of Mataji, apparently without any reason.

Looking at Mataji, Subramania Iyer said, "I don't know this language. I don't understand it."

Just then a few devotees rushed in to make pranams to Mataji. So Mataji left the room followed by Subramania Iyer. S. and Swami Krishnananda were eager to ascertain from Mataji the exact cause and significance of her strange words to Subramania Iyer. They waited for an opportune moment to ask her.

January 7, 1953

91. 9 a.m. Papa was in the bhajan-hall. Ramachandra Rao and a few others were seated near him.

Pretentious Papa : "The greater the devotee, the greater is his abhiman. He gets puffed up because he thinks he has great devotion."

Repetition of

Ramnam

There was perfect silence.

Papa : (to Ramachandra Rao) : "Is it true you are going tomorrow?"

R. Rao : "No, Papa."

Papa : "Ramdas thought so, but he heard that you have decided to go tomorrow. You cannot run away like that. Ramdas will not allow you to get away so soon."

The usual reading from the book *Guru Ramana* started after Mataji and a few others came and took their seats. It dealt with the last days of Sri Ramana, giving details of his physical ailment.

In the afternoon Papa was busy reading out from *The Illustrated Weekly* to the devotees present. There were many jokes punctuated with a lot of laughter.

In the evening Papa went for a walk followed by a few ashramites. While returning, he came as usual along the roundabout way, by way of the car shed and kitchen. When he was near the kitchen he heard Kunhambu, a worker in the kitchen, repeating Ramnam aloud. Papa remarked : "Kunhambu has become a singer now. But when these people start singing Ramnam loudly, Ramdas is reminded of Padmanabhan, a young man who was once working in the kitchen. He used to repeat Ramnam aloud and appeared to be a great bhakta. Sometimes he would wear gerua cloth also and looked like a blooming sannyasi. Everybody here had regard for him, and those in the kitchen made it a point to see that he was fed well. He grew fatter and fatter. Do you know the result? He fell in love with a girl, daughter of an ashram worker. When the girl was sick he used to go to her house, sit by her side and repeat some mantra to cure her. Finally he proposed to her. But the parents did not give their approval. He was sent away from here. Till then nobody would believe Ramdas when he warned them about this fellow. Sometimes Ramdas used to go to the kitchen and watch the fun of Padmanabhan being treated like a saint and specially fed by the workers. Then he would laugh, make fun of Padmanabhan and come away. That is why Ramdas is afraid when these people start repeating Ramnam aloud and pose like great bhaktas. Others make much of them and praise them. They get puffed up and finally fall."

S : "Papa, this spiritual world is a realm by itself and very funny too."

Papa : "These devotees do not find any difference between matter and spirit !"

S : "That must be a very high state !"

Papa laughed.

92. Swami Krishnananda and S. were working in the office. Mataji
Mataji on came in. A few minutes later Subramania Iyer, Anandashram Post-
Fasting master, brought two money orders for her. She signed the forms
 and the money was paid to her.

Subramania Iyer wanted a few annas which he asked of Mataji. She gave him a rupee. He told her that he wanted only a few annas ; she, however, asked him to keep the rupee.

Swami Krishnananda : "Let him keep the rupee. He seems to have no money even to pay the barber."

Subramania Iyer : "That does not matter ; I shall grow a beard."

S : "If we do not take a shave for a few days, Papa asks us if we are too busy to spare time even for shaving."

Subramania Iyer (to Mataji) : "In fact, Mother, I do not get time for shaving. I come from the post office at 10-30 a.m. and then I can think only of my bath and meal."

Mataji : "That is but natural. When you feel the pinch of hunger, all other things are easily forgotten or ignored. Then you do not think of shaving or even of bath. The same will be the case when your mind is occupied with some higher or more important thing such as seeking Gcd, or say, making arrangements for the marriage of your daughter. It is not that you will absolutely give up food on such occasions, but you may reduce it, or change your hours of eating. In my case, in the days of sadhana, I used to eat all right. I have never fasted and I do not advise others also to go on fast."

S : "Papa has fasted many times, but he too does not ask us to fast, except when we feel the need for it on physical or spiritual considerations."

Mataji : "Papa once used to describe to us the rigorous sadhana he had passed through. But all need not, nor will be able to go through such difficult discipline. I cannot bear hunger. I would eat whenever I wanted. See, for example, today they had prepared curry of tuvar (a kind of pulse) and I liked it very much. I took a good quantity at noon. Now they brought a little for Ramkishor and when he told me about it, I had a desire to take it again. In the evening, I generally take only milk and rice brought here from the kitchen, but this evening I ran up to the kitchen and took some tuvar. I do not believe in fasting."

93. Of late, Papa was having pain in the joints, especially on the left
Joy in all side, due to rheumatism. Oil massage was being given daily, but there
Actions was not much relief. Even after the evening walk he said that the
 pain still persisted.

It was past 10 p.m. Resting on the bed, when his body was being massaged, Papa said, "Ramdas is now waiting for Sarangapani to come with the medicine. Do you know what will happen when Ramdas starts taking the medicine? He will be eating like a glutton and the expenses will go up." All laughed. Mataji asked him if the expenses would go up by ten rupees a day.

Papa : "Last time when Ramdas took the medicine in Bangalore, Sarangapani's wife prepared fine food and made Ramdas eat plenty of it every time. In twelve days he gained twelve pounds in weight. This time he has to take the medicine for twentyfour days and he will therefore increase his weight by twentyfour pounds. His weight after the treatment will be one hundred and twentysix plus twentyfour, that is, one hundred and fifty. Then if he puts on a pair of trousers and a cap he will look like P. whose picture we see very often in the papers nowadays. Sarangapani

knows we do not get good vegetables here. So he will bring two baskets full of them."

It was time for Papa to sleep. The massage over, he was sitting on the bed. Mataji and S. were gently rubbing his hands. After a few minutes he got up to go to the inner room and remarked : "See, Ramdas has joy in everything ; he finds joy in sitting ; he finds joy in walking ; he finds joy in reading ; in sleeping, in getting up, in tuning the radio. There is joy in everything he does."

Mataji : "Papa has so much joy in doing everything. But I have no joy or enthusiasm in doing things."

Papa : "No, it is not so, she also enjoys whatever she does. Though she may not show it as Ramdas does, you can understand by the way she does everything—so systematic and thorough."

While retiring to bed, Papa said, "The body is tired. Now he must sleep."

January 8, 1953

94. At 8-30 a.m., Papa was in the bhajan-hall, attending to
Love of God correspondence, and S. was taking down notes. Swami
breaks Bonds Krishnananda and Ramachandra Rao were sitting near-by. After
of Moha dictating the last letter, Papa said, "Like a big fellow, Ramdas is sitting here and giving advice and instruction. He is like a dictator. But how many do you think follow his advice ? Whatever he tells them, they do not do, they go on doing as they like."

S : "Papa should not simply give advice, but must see that they also act accordingly."

Papa : "That is what Ramdas wants to do now. He is tired of giving advice. Now he must quietly see that the devotees live the real life. See the boy Ramkishor. Ramdas is daily guiding and advising him. Do you know what he says ? 'Papa, what is the use of your simply telling me what to do and what not to do ? You are all-powerful, and so you must make me do what you want. I have no power to follow what you say. My nature is such that it makes me do so many things which you do not like'."

Swami Krishnananda : "Papa must resort, if necessary, to violent methods to see that devotees follow his advice."

Papa : "Do you mean to say that Ramdas should break open the doors of their hearts and get inside ? They have closed the doors so tight that Ramdas finds

absolutely no chance to get in. If they, by any chance, make a small opening, Ramdas will enter and bring about the miracle. But they do not. The bonds must be broken. Love can do it. You know the burglar breaks open the houses, on account of his love for money. So also your love for God must make you break all the bonds of moha. Suppose you are bound by a rope and you want to get away. There is no use of your prostrating to the rope and asking for permission to go. You have to forcibly break it and your love for freedom will give you the strength to do so."

95. After about half an hour S. came with a bottle of oil and asked if
Need For he should apply oil on Papa's head. Papa was busy reading
Correct something and had a woollen waistcoat on. He replied : "You may
Understanding apply the oil. But you must carefully do it as he does not want to sit
of Saints like a statue for ten minutes. He is not going to remove the waistcoat
or the spectacles. He wants to be reading."

S. carefully applied the oil on his head while Papa continued the reading.

Papa took up the book *Guru Ramana*. Mataji came and sat before him. That day's portion dealt with the mahasamadhi of Maharshi and was very pathetic. After the reading, Papa asked S. if Maharshi had hard breathing or groaning at the last hour. S. replied that he was not present on the last day, as he returned from Ramanashram the previous day. Then Papa put the same question to Ramachandra Rao.

Ramachandra Rao : "There was some heavy breathing and he was rolling his head from one side to the other. Though he would never have felt it, it was clear the body was in severe pain."

Papa : "What do you mean ? What was the cause for the suffering of the body then ?"

R. Rao : "What can I say, Papa ? It was perhaps prarabdha."

Papa : "Then, in talking, walking, etc., was it Maharshi doing all those actions or prarabdha ?"

When the talk was going on in this strain, Mataji and S. left the hall to arrange for Papa's shave and bath. When they were about to descend the steps Mataji told S. : "When people write books about Maharshi, besides writing what the Maharshi said, they add their own ideas and opinions. Maharshi might have made a statement on a particular occasion or context, but these writers take the statement as applicable everywhere, in all conditions. For example, a statement in reference to the treatment of eyes is likely to be considered applicable by the devotees to hands or legs. That is

to say, when Maharshi talks about one aspect of the Reality, devotees take it to be the only aspect and do not understand the remaining aspect or aspects. They mix up matters concerning one aspect with those of other aspects. This is all caused by improper understanding. I do not know if you follow what I say. The writings based upon such misunderstanding may not seriously affect the ordinary reader. But the real aspirants who are advancing on the path will be confused very much. It is said in this book that Maharshi never suffered any pain caused by the illness. A sadhaka reads this and tries to find out what is happening in his case. He is doing sadhana, and intensely asserts that he is not the body, but the eternal and changeless Atman. But when there is some disease, he feels the pain. Now he wonders and thinks, 'Maharshi is said to have never felt pain, but I am feeling it!' Thereafter all his attention is on the body, as he determines that he must free himself from the feeling of pain. He tries to harass the body in many ways. His mind which was attuned to the Eternal in meditation, has now come down to the body and he is greatly disturbed. His progress is hampered. Thus, such books are likely to create doubt and vacillation in the minds of sadhakas."

Mataji added : "Once a devotee told me that Papa was showing some special love towards certain persons. I tried to make him understand that even if saints appear to love some more than others, it does not mean that they have come to a lower level. Their identification with the eternal, changeless Spirit is not at all affected by their external actions. I wanted to cite an example from the life of one whom the devotee admired most. So I told him that Maharshi once wept when the son of a very loving woman-worker of Ramanashram passed away. He wept because the mother was weeping. The point is that when you accept saints as all in all, as existing in everything and everything existing in them, it naturally follows that when they have the so-called good, they will have the so-called bad also in them. If you look at your palm, you see one side of the hand. Has it not got the other side also ? Can you cut away the other side of the hand ? Similarly if you accept the good in a person, you must accept also the bad in him."

96. 7-30 p.m. Evening bhajan was going on. Mataji came to the office room where Swami Krishnananda and S. were sitting. After **Ask Blessings only for Spiritual Progress** a few minutes' discussion with Swami Krishnananda in connection with his work, she entered into a casual talk. Swami Krishnananda then told her that S. and himself could not really understand why she had told Subramania Iyer two days ago, when he prostrated before her, that she needed his blessings. He also added that they were eagerly waiting for an opportunity to talk to her about that.

Mataji, smiling in her usual genial way, said, "That day something had happened in the kitchen and I was annoyed with the workers there. I came here

soon after that and gave you the fountain pen to be handed over to Subramania Iyer. After receiving it from your hands, he prostrated before me asking for blessings ; blessings for such perishable things as the fountain pen. It would have been something if he had at least asked for blessings so that he might write more Ramnam with the pen, as the pen was given to him for that purpose. Blessings are worth while only for spiritual purposes, for attaining God's Saswat Svarup, or Eternal Being."

97 Mataji continued: "Before Papa took me into His own Svarup, 'My Work must be Universal', I was striving for my own liberation. But, for the last twentytwo years, since the starting of this ashram, I have been striving my best to see that everyone who comes into contact with me makes quick progress on the spiritual path and attains liberation. I am greatly disappointed, however, to see that there is no one who is prepared to take real advantage, when Papa is with us in flesh and blood, ready to shower his grace on all. Nobody truly wants spiritual liberation, though many may talk about it. They are only after petty, material pleasures and worldly pursuits. Those whom I wished well and strove to help all these years are now kicking me in the back. I feel this is so because Papa, perhaps, does not wish that I should bestow my attention on a few individuals instead of on the whole universe. It is like this. Take my little finger, for example ; nay, take one small hair of my body. If I were to give all my attention for the growth of that one hair alone, the result will be that the rest of my body will suffer, and sometimes, due to such over-attention, that hair itself will not grow ; rather, it may even fall off. What I should do, therefore, is to pay attention to my body as a whole. Then, all the parts will automatically get the benefit of the attention. When I am the universe, when I have identified myself with the universe, my work also must be universal, and not confined to any one individual or set of individuals. Papa is only teaching me to be universal by giving me such experiences as I have had during all these years. I have tried during this period for the spiritual progress of those individuals who came into contact with me, but have failed in my attempt. When Subramania Iyer prostrated before me the other day, all these ideas came rushing to my mind. That was why I told him that he did not need blessings from me, but on the other hand, I needed blessings from all, so that I might succeed in my efforts."

S : "How can others, spiritually immature, bless you, a saint, and what is this effort of yours?"

Mataji : "My efforts, as I told you, is for the spiritual progress and liberation of all ; and all can bless me for success in that effort of mine so that all striving souls may be blessed with spiritual elevation and realisation."

Swami Krishnananda and S. were struck by Mataji's deep compassion and great concern for the spiritual welfare of all, as revealed by these words.

January 9, 1953

98. Ray Magee, the young American who had come the previous day,
Ramnam— spent an hour with Papa discussing his personal problems.
The Best When he left, Mataji came to the bhajan-hall. Papa then told her :
Medicine "This American knows something about meditation. He was a
 student till last year. He had studied under Dr. Frederic Spiegelberg.
Though he looks tall and stout, he is very young. He wants to get married after
returning to America."

The post brought the news that Sarangapani Mudaliar of Bangalore had been admitted in a hospital in Bombay for an operation of suspected cancer on his tongue. He was to come here to start a course of treatment for Papa. Papa remarked that he was then more concerned with Sarangapani's health than with his own.

After bhajan, Papa read out Sarangapani's letter to Mataji. She suggested that Papa's treatment as proposed should not be taken up, as there had been many obstacles and so, the omen was not good. She also added that she was not in favour of the treatment from the very beginning, as she felt the use of the bhasma too often was injurious. She finally said: "Let us not depend upon any medicine for Papa's health. Let us all write and repeat Ramnam more and more. Papa's health will be all right."

XII

Anandashram, January 10, 1953

99. 7-30 a.m. Papa was returning from the toilet. Lakshmi's son
Likhit Japa Sriram four or five years old, was crying aloud in the adjoining
Target room. Papa came rushing and asked him, "Sriram, why are you
 crying?" Lakshmi said it was pure obstinacy and nothing else.
Papa now told him, "If you cry any more, Kanna will be asked to take you into the
goshala and lock you up inside. Kanna is here right now. Do you want to be tied
up in the goshala near our stud-bull Madhava?" The moment he heard Papa's voice
he stopped crying. Ashram children were terribly afraid if they were told that they
would be tied up with the cows in the goshala. That threat was generally the last
resort of Mataji to tame mischievous children.

It was past noon. Papa was about to go for his midday rest. In the hall
Swami Krishnananda was fanning him; Motiben and S. were massaging his body
and Mataji and Ramkishor were sitting in front of the asan, writing Ramnam. A few
days after Papa had started on his tour in November last, the ashramites started
writing Ramnam as directed by Mataji. It was done with the prayer that Papa
should return to the ashram safe. On account of ill-health Papa had to cancel
further programmes and return from the tour after a month and three days. After
return, Papa asked the ashramites to continue writing Ramnam. He said it was by
the power of Ramnam that he returned without any serious breakdown. Besides
endorsing this, Mataji said that all should write Ramnam with greater zeal and
enthusiasm, and increase the daily record as much as possible. The target was
originally fixed at twentyeight lakhs. Later on she raised it to fourteen crores.
So Ramnam-writing was in full swing with almost everybody in the ashram and
also visitors taking part in it.

In the course of a talk on writing Ramnam S. told Mataji that the cost of
note-books for writing one lakh Ramnam would be seven rupees. The note-books
to write fourteen crores would cost about ten thousand rupees. She asked how
much had been spent so far. She was told that it was about sixty rupees.

Mataji remarked: "Don't worry about the cost. Let us go on with the
writing and finish fourteen crores. Money will come somehow."

100. **Power of Ramnam—
Likhit Japa
Purely
Nishkama ?** Papa : "Hyderabad devotees were spending lots of money for purchasing note-books for writing Ramnam. They might have easily spent about four or five thousand rupees. But do you know what wonder Ramnam has done to them? They were then under the terror of the Razakars and living in constant fear. Many came to Ramdas and wanted to know what they should do to be safe from danger. Ramdas asked them to go on writing or repeating Ramnam. Thousands of them started repeating Ramnam in great earnestness. The result was that in a short time the Government of India took what they called 'Police Action' which put an end to the Razakar menace and brought peace to Hyderabad."

S : "By the effect of Ramnam, do all troubles disappear, or do the people get inner strength to withstand the troubles?"

Papa : "Both. The troubles may vanish. If the troubles still persist in spite of Ramnam, the devotees will have the strength to bear them bravely."

S : "Will not the repetition with the desire to ward off troubles come under the category of sakama bhakti, devotion with a special purpose?"

Papa : "Of course, it is sakama."

Mataji : "Papa, our Ramnam-writing in the ashram is not sakama. This cannot be sakama as we are doing it only for your long life, so that you may give eternal peace to all."

Papa : "Then it is both sakama and nishkama at the same time, as the desire is for achieving eternal peace."

Swami Krishnananda : "How can we call it sakama? Desire to attain liberation cannot be taken as sakama at all."

S : "Papa, we—Mataji and others—have already discussed the subject and have come to the conclusion that our Ramnam-writing is purely nishkama."

Papa : "O, you have already discussed and decided! Then Ramdas is going to sleep now!"

101. **Greatness
of Ramnam** 10 p.m. Generally devotees would have an enjoyable time with Papa in the afternoons when he talked to them in a jovial manner. But evenings with him would be still better. For half an hour before he went to sleep, four or five would be with him—two massaging his body while the others sat near the cot. Mataji would also be in the group. Papa

would then go on making all those present there laugh till their sides ached. The talks generally were on ordinary topics of day-to-day life. But when Papa handled them, he threw out remarks sparkling with wit and wisdom. He would look at the brighter side of things only and that too in the most humorous way. Whenever things went wrong, his highest degree of detachment was clearly seen ; when he dealt with those in need or suffering, it was the purest love in action. His courage to start new ventures and face unpleasant situations, was remarkable. Indeed those were not ordinary lessons for those who observed him closely. To understand him was to revere him, love him and worship him and also to realise one's incapacity to plumb his depths.

Ramkishor had set his bed near Papa's cot. Mataji was sitting by the side of Ramkishor and fanning him. That day he had written more Ramnam than on any day so far and had also repeated Ramnam for an hour. Lying down, Papa was talking to Ramkishor. When reference was made to Ramnam he said to him : "If you repeat Ramnam daily and taste the sweetness, you will surely hold on to it and become a mahatma. People will say, 'This is not Ramkishor, but a different person.' Do you know the power of Ramnam? It is wonderful. Valmiki became a great rishi by repeating Ramnam, even though he did it in the reverse order. Repeating the Name, he sat absorbed in it for such a long time that his body was covered with earth and white ants. It is well-known how great he became. Take the case of Rishi Narada, the son of a servant woman. By repeating 'Narayana, Narayana' always, he became a devarshi. Can you not see how Ramnam has transformed Ramdas? Constant repetition of Ramnam has raised him to this state. What do you see in Ramdas?"

Ramkishor : "Everything is all right with you."

Papa : "Is he like any other person or different?"

Ramkishor : "You are slightly different from others."

Papa : "What is the difference?"

Now Ramkishor thought it better to stop the conversation, as otherwise Papa might corner him on some point. He said, "I am going to sleep." Papa laughed and remarked, "The fellow is afraid and does not want to get caught. So he goes to sleep."

January 11, 1953

102.
**A separate
Room for
Papa**

Around eight o' clock in the morning, carpenter Vishwakarma who had been sent for was standing before Papa. Papa directed him to see Mataji in the kitchen. Mataji asked him first to take some tiffin and coffee. After coffee, they both came together and met Papa near the bhajan-hall. After some discussion among themselves

Vishwakarma took some measurements at the south-western corner outside the bhajan-hall, and the site was fixed for the construction of a room with flush and bath attached for Papa's use. It had been the desire of Mataji for many years that Papa should have a separate room. The bhajan-hall was then used by Papa for sitting, dining, sleeping and so on and it was always noisy and crowded. The bath room and toilet were at a distance on a lower level; Papa found it difficult to go there. The bhajan mandir then consisted of a main hall and an attached room. It was the first structure of the ashram. In those days the hall was protected from wind and rain, by bamboo mattings. Later on, in 1940 or so a veranda on all sides was added and the bamboo mattings were replaced by laterite wall and wooden doors. The hall was a spacious one and at the southern end Papa sat for bhajan on a raised asan facing north. The rest of the time he sat on a chair at the north-western corner, where there were a book-shelf, a radio and a radiogram. Devotees came at all hours of the day and met him in that hall. Papa had, of late, been feeling that he needed some quiet time in a room of his own. Rani Lalita Devi and Sagarlal Gupta of Hyderabad had sent donations for the construction of the much-needed room for Papa. So that day the idea began to take shape. The carpenter took the measurements and promised to give an estimate the next day.

103. 12 noon. Papa was getting ready for the afternoon nap. Sitting in
Cosmic Mind front of the asan Mataji was writing Ramnam. There was again some
does all talk about the writing and repetition of Ramnam. Mataji said that
Thinking she was repeating Ramnam orally at least eight times, while she
 wrote the mantra once. Papa wondered how this could be possible.
 He thought that one could repeat only once by the time one wrote a single mantra. Otherwise the writing would be purely mechanical and it would have no connection with the repetition.

Mataji : "By the time I write 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram' once, I repeat the same mantra many times. I can also repeat in the meantime a few other mantras which I used to repeat years back. And, in addition, I can think of something about the kitchen work too. They say such things are possible for those who have a double head-line on their palm."

Papa : "When Ramdas does something, he cannot take his mind anywhere else. When he writes one Ramnam, he can repeat it mentally only once."

(To Swami Krishnananda and S.) : "Is there any difference between Ramdas and others ? When he is working, talking, and so forth can you make out that he is doing everything in the complete absence of the mind ?"

S : "Papa, this is a hard question for us to answer. But Papa has mentioned somewhere that Papa has a mind which is the most purified and that he has also an ego which is the most purified. What does Papa say now ?"

Papa : "A completely purified mind is no mind in the ordinary sense, but it is the cosmic mind, and the perfectly purified ego is only the universal Self."

S : "Does it mean that Papa is doing things like a machine without any thought whatsoever?"

Papa : "The cosmic mind does all the thinking in the world. It is the cosmic consciousness that does everything. It is the cosmic consciousness again, that causes all the thoughts and movements in everyone. There is only one and not two. Others are not conscious of this, but he (Ramdas) is conscious of it."

S : "Who is conscious? When Papa says, 'he is conscious' of something, it means there are two."

Papa (*laughing*) : "The cosmic consciousness is conscious of the cosmic consciousness, that is of itself. It is all one, and one only."

All laughed.

S : "Sometimes you talk about Ram as different from you, don't you?"

104. Suddenly Papa remembered something and turning to S. asked
Recording him : "You were once recording Ramdas's talks. Are you still doing
the Talks it?"

S : "Yes, Papa. I have been doing it. It is not continuous. There are long breaks."

Papa : "Ramdas thought as much."

Swami Krishnananda : "How did Papa know that he is doing it now?"

Papa : "Somehow Ramdas smelt it. Otherwise he was about to suggest it to him. Ramdas knew, whenever any conversation took place between him and Ramdas or between others and Ramdas, he would note down important points. The devotees of Sri Ramakrishna have recorded beautifully some conversations. They perhaps wrote down immediately so that they could get the very words of Sri Ramakrishna."

S : "Papa, I am writing them before I go to bed."

Papa : "Are you recording only spiritual talks or other talks also?"

S : "I record a lot of fun too. Without Papa's jokes there is no fun in recording."

Papa : "Yes, without fun it will be a serious and dry affair. Now Ramdas should sleep."

Now Mataji, Swami Krishnananda, and S. got up and were about to leave the hall, when two others stood on either side of Papa to fan him. Papa then remarked, "You have handed over charge of Ramdas to these two. They are to be the caretakers now." Looking at them, he said, "Do you know Sri Ramakrishna's words? Let your hands be fanning while your minds are fixed on God." He then pulled the thin white sheet over himself and went to sleep.

January 12, 1953

105. For the last two or three days Papa had been reading *Yogi*
Yogi *Milarepa*, the biography of a Tibetan saint. Early in the morning
Milarepa he started reading it aloud to the devotees gathered round him.
Among the listeners was the American friend, Ray Magee. When
Papa stopped reading, this friend asked : "Do you place this saint on the same
level as Buddha, Krishna or Christ?"

Papa : "Ramdas is just reading the book. But the author has said that Milarepa was considered as great as Buddha or Christ."

Ray Magee : "If such saints are considered so great, why don't they exert their influence on people as Buddha and Christ do? Now, in your case Buddha and Christ came to you in a vision, but no other saint. If others are equally great, why did they not come?"

Papa : "Ramdas saw Gandhiji also in a vision. First he had the vision of Sri Krishna. He had the vision of these three—Krishna, Buddha, Christ—because he was thinking more of them than others, and drawing inspiration from them. He was also keeping with him, *The Bhagavad Gita*, *The Light of Asia*, and *the New Testament*. His vision of Gandhiji was not a very clear one."

Ray Magee : "Saints like Milarepa may not be so great as Buddha, Krishna and Christ, because in their earlier life they were only ordinary men, leading the usual life of the world, and then realised the Truth. Is my view correct?"

Papa : "No, that makes no difference. Buddha was an ordinary prince, subject to all the vasanas as others, in early life. Still in later years, he became a source of inspiration for millions of people. Even now, you know, millions of people follow him and draw inspiration from him. For Ramdas, on the ethical side, Buddha was the ideal."

106. The talk gradually drifted to Papa's wandering life, about which
Open Spaces he said, "In those days Ramdas used to wander like a free and
Broaden blissful child. The extensive open spaces attracted him very much.
Vision—Die Once he stayed in a hill in Kashmir. He spent all the time gazing at
to Live the vast expanse of hills and lakes. The very sight charmed the
 mind. It became still without any effort and he sat for hours
 together, totally absorbed.

"Ramdas pities the plight of people living in small rooms. How can they expand their vision? They do not find time to go to any open place outside the town. People living such lives cannot but be narrow-minded and selfish. During his wandering life, Ramdas never liked to stay in houses, especially in cities. Now, of course, he goes and stays wherever he is invited. His life has taken a different colour now."

Ray Magee : "What is the mantra that you are all repeating here?"

Papa : "'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'. This mantra represents both the manifest and the unmanifest aspects of God. OM is the first sound wave that rose from the Unmanifest and is the cause of the universal manifestation—creation, preservation and destruction. There are many who repeat only OM, still their minds and realise the primeval source of all manifestation. Through OM they reach the absolute, unmanifest Truth."

Ray Magee : "When I was meditating once, I heard a voice telling me, 'Give up your mind.' At that time I could not understand what that meant. I thought it was all meaningless and did not give any importance to the voice."

Papa : "The voice was right. It was guiding you. 'Give up your mind' means, surrender your mind to God."

Ray Magee : "Another time, while engaged in deep meditation, I could feel I had reached a point and again I heard the voice say : 'If you break it, you will die. If you do not, you will live a good man.' I had to decide that very moment. I thought that life was worth living, but now I realise I made a mistake in deciding as I did. I don't know if I will have another chance to decide."

Papa laughed and said : "There, death meant the death of the ego, the lower self. The ego must die. You must die to live. An earnest aspirant was once going about in search of a guru. He met a saint who, to all external appearance, was a beggar, living on the remains of food thrown from houses in a village. He was clothed in dirty rags. The aspirant however recognised him as a great mahatma and followed him wherever he went. For a fortnight he followed the saint like his shadow, but never did the saint speak a word to him. The villagers, who were

watching this young man following the saint day and night, asked the saint why he was so unkind to the aspirant, why he did not bless him, why he did not even care to look at him. At this the saint smilingly called the aspirant, looked at him and said: 'Ja Marja', which meant 'Go and die'. The aspirant felt blessed. He got enlightenment. Death here means death of the ego. We should not have fear for such a death."

In the evening, Papa went for his usual walk. Ramachandra Rao, Ramkishor and S. were following him. They were walking on the open ground in front of the ashram and had gone a few yards beyond the dispensary building, when a boy from the Udyog Shala brought a chit to Papa. Reading the chit, which was from Gopal, Papa asked those by his side, "What is the date today, 12th or 13th? It is 12th." He added, "Gopal has written 13th. He is so absent-minded; Ramdas will have some fun with him tonight when he comes to the ashram." Papa then put a big interrogation mark against the date shown, wrote a few lines in reply to Gopal's query, and sent the boy away with the chit.

Papa then wanted to return. He said, "Ramdas is not in a mood to walk further today. His stomach is bloated with a lot of gas. He feels uneasy. What did he take in the noon to suffer from wind?"

S: "Papa took the curry made from white beans. That is a pucca gas-producing agent."

Papa: "Ah, you are right. Ramdas never thought it was so bad. He wants to avoid all such preparations. But Mataji wants that everything prepared in the kitchen should be brought to him, to be seen by him. It is like naivedya (offering of food to God). But they forget it is not an offering to a stone-god that does not eat but to a living God who eats! Ramdas ought to have asked them to remove the dish straightway, from the plate. He did not do it. He tasted a bit, found it nice, and took more. His hand would automatically go to take more and more. Now he pays the penalty. You may give some Hingashtaka to Ramdas."

On return, S. gave Papa the medicine and also tied a piece of flannel round his abdomen as protection against cold.

107. Evening bhajan was about to start. When S. entered the hall, he saw Papa removing the flannel. When he asked Papa why he was taking it off, Papa said, "Oh, it is so uncomfortable; when loose, it slips down; and if it is tight, Ramdas cannot sit properly."

Bank of Ramnam

S: "How is Papa's stomach now?"

Papa : " 'Stomach' is there in its position. Ramdas polished off two rotis just now—so it is all right." *(Laughter)* Continuing, he said : "Is this not like the story of the sadhu who had stomach-ache and was cured when the doctor, whom he consulted, took him home and fed him with some big-sized laddus ?" *(A ripple of laughter)*

It was 9 p.m. All the ashramites and the visitors who had written Ramnam brought their note-books for Papa's signature. Papa was sitting in the bhajan-hall surrounded by the devotees. S. was sitting in front of Papa to write down on a note-book the names of the devotees and the number written by each. This was the Ramnam Bank where the devotees had come to deposit their daily earnings. All the note-books were signed by Papa. The total came to sixteen thousand and two hundred and seventyfive.

Papa : "Ah, it is less today. Why is the figure going down ?"

At that time Gopal brought his note-book for signature. Papa looked at him, laughed and asked : "Gopal, what is the date today, 12th or 13th ?" Gopal had by then known his mistake. He kept quiet for a while. In the meantime Papa himself added, "Gopal, you are a day ahead."

Gopal : "I have no calendar there, Papa."

Papa : "That is a very fine excuse." *(Laughter)*.

XIII

Anandashram, January 13, 1953

108. In the afternoon Papa was listening to the radio. Ramachandra
The Whole Rao was gently fanning him. Ray Magee, the American devotee,
Universe was reading a book, sitting in front of Papa. After some time he
is One drew nearer to Papa and began to talk.

Ray Magee : "Are the politicians doing any real service to humanity ?"

Papa : "Don't be a mere political instrument. Work on purely political lines is on the lower plane. Of course, politicians try to do some good for the world. But they limit their work to the interests of their party or country. And very often it is found that they do more harm than good to people. Politics is, after all, a vicious circle. You know it is called 'power politics'. Instead of working for power, name and fame, you must aim at higher things. We must stand on higher and vaster plane from which we can see all humanity as one. In fact, the whole universe is one. There is a sloka in Sanskrit, the meaning of which is : 'Shiva is my father, Parvati is my mother, all devotees of Shiva are my brothers and the three worlds my home.' What a glorious vision ! And with what strength and authority we say we belong to the whole universe, instead of merely asserting that we are Indians, Americans, Englishmen or Frenchmen ! We can claim the vast universe, our divine father's property, as our own. You must have heard about St. Francis of Assisi. He used to address every being as brother—'brother dog', 'brother bird' and so on. He could extend his sense of brotherhood even to lower animals. Is this not a grand vision ? We must keep the highest ideal before us. In order that our mind may not come down to the lower level, we must have constant remembrance of God. It is like keeping our face always towards the sun. If we turn back we shall be facing the shadow."

109. Ray Magee : "How is it that men, who have attained God, still
Who is a True continue to work and act in the world ? Sankara was moving in the
Instrument of world preaching, arguing, working. How do you explain this ?"
God ?

Papa : "Sankara had risen above body-consciousness and was well established in the superconscious state, in which he found his real being and existence. From

this state he saw himself as the pure inner witness, the Sakshi, of all the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. Note that he was a witness not only of the waking state, but also of the sleeping and dreaming states. It is only on reaching the superconscious state that one can be a witness of all the three states. The universe is then seen as a dream, an illusion. Whatever you do in that state is without any sense of doership or effect on that consciousness. You are the witness, quite detached and free.

"If the world really exists, where does it go when we are asleep? You know that the world does not exist for us while sleeping, but is back when we are awake. It comes and goes. So it can be only a play of the mind. This is what Sankara says.

"There is also another way of looking at it. The universe is the manifestation of God's power. This power is working, having as its basis that supreme consciousness which is absolute, changeless, motionless and eternal, and which is a mere witness of all the activities born of that power. It is like the sun who witnesses all the activities of the world, and is at the same time helping all growth and action, giving light and heat. Similarly, God is responsible in a way for bringing about all life, activities and movements in the world, but still He is the passive witness of everything. God's power, that has manifested itself as the universe and all its movements, is being witnessed by God Himself. His is the power that manifests; He is also the witness of that power, the Spirit beyond the manifestation. He is both static and dynamic at once.

"Creation or movement implies form. Is it not so? This thing (*taking his spittoon in his hand*) has a form. Every particle of this is in a state of constant vibration, though invisible to us. A breeze blowing on a still sheet of water causes small ripples or waves. The waves are nothing but the same water in motion. The movement caused the formless to assume a form. So also, in the bosom of the Infinite, in the stillness of the Spirit, a wave arose and the entire universe came into existence. Every particle of the universe is in a state of vibration or movement. This accounts for the manifold forms."

Continuing, Papa said, "According to the Tantric philosophy, eternal motion and eternal rest coexist in God. The changeless, formless, motionless, eternal Spirit is in eternal rest, while the universe is in eternal motion. God is both stillness and movement at once. He is at once static and dynamic. This is the mystery. We cannot define God. The intellect cannot comprehend Him. He is active and at the same time inactive. When we move and act in the world we must feel that everything is done solely by His power. We must also realise Him as the absolute changeless Spirit. We are then in that state of superconsciousness in which we can be the pure witness of the world and its movements.

"Years ago, when Ramdas came out of a cave after deep meditation and was walking, he was feeling at the same time that he was the motionless Spirit, all-pervading. He was really surprised. The body was walking and yet he felt he was not moving. He was the calm and still Spirit. When this experience came to him, he realised the truth that the power manifested in the form of the universe was not different from the absolute, static Spirit.

"He who has this knowledge and experience becomes a real instrument of God. He is ever in tune with God. God's power is universal, so his actions too have the stamp of the universal. He has no ego-sense. He does not do things for himself, from the viewpoint of an ordinary individual. He works in the knowledge that he is the universal Spirit, and whatever is done by him is for the good of all beings. He rises beyond the notion of individuals, parties or nations. His thoughts and actions have a universal significance. In the early stages, one gets glimpses of the universal consciousness. Then one is puzzled and does not clearly know whether one is acting from the universal standpoint or from that of the individual."

110. Ray Magee : "I had a strong urge sometime back that I should, in
Saints the company of some others, send a message of love to the world
Promote and move from place to place in Europe and Russia, carrying the
Universal message of love and non-violence. But I was not sure if it was a
Peace prompting from God."

Papa : "You were then inspired by God. When your mind is concentrated upon God, the thought of universal peace that rises in your heart will work wonders. If a million people thus raise a wave of pure peace-thought, each in his or her own mind, it will surely arrest the blind rush of mankind towards war and dispel from the minds of people all thought of war.

"About two years ago when Ramdas was in Bombay, there seemed to be a sign of imminent war. A few friends then came to Ramdas and expressed their fears. Then Ramdas somehow declared that war was not going to break out. Soon after, the war-clouds dispersed. Even now, when war-clouds gather, Ramdas feels intuitively there will be no war. His keen wish is also that. Such a feeling is indeed the outcome of tremendous faith in God. Ramdas is watching what is going on in the world, through the radio and the newspapers. Sitting on this hillock, he could feel, as it were, the pulse of the world. There is nothing wrong with the pulse, though it is beating a bit fast. This may be due to the prevailing nervous tension. All will quiet down, by God's grace."

Papa continued : "People ask Ramdas why there is so much trouble and suffering in the world. Ramdas's answer is that we suffer because we have forgotten

God. When we do not remember God, or do not pray to Him, how can we have peace and happiness? But, fortunately for the world, there are a few great souls, who strongly desire peace and will that war should not break out. So peace shall prevail in spite of adverse factors.

"Ramdas often feels like going to America and other countries that are agitated by fear of war, to tell the people that war is not going to break out, that they must remember and pray to God for universal peace. When God calls, Ramdas will go. When He wills, Ramdas will go not only to America, but all over the world. He has gone many times to several places in India. He now wants to tour foreign countries. There are so many friends in Europe and America who would like him to visit them. Perhaps the time is not yet ripe. God knows best. The idea is there. Suddenly it comes up and soon calms down. His will be done !

"But why should Ramdas go anywhere at all? Why should he not send waves of peace-thought from here, so that the necessary transformation is brought about at the other end? All the great souls in the world, who remain ever in tune with God, are definitely working towards world peace. It is not one or two alone who are contributing towards this. Do you think that the great saints now living are not working for peace? The combined power of all the saints must produce the desired effect. By sending positive thoughts of peace, they can neutralise the dark forces that drive men to war. We should realise the divine force to counteract the asuric force."

111. Ramachandra Rao : "Your visit to foreign countries will surely help **Thoughts will** to spread this message of peace."
not go in vain

Papa : "Yes. Millions should co-operate for the supreme cause of peace. We should strive not to fight and destroy the enemy, but to dispel the war-idea altogether by bringing about a change in the minds of people."

This talk was going on then for about an hour. It was time for Papa's coffee.

S : "Papa talked with so much enthusiasm that it looked as if Papa had almost started for America."

Papa : "These thoughts of Ramdas will not go in vain. Mataji would have been pleased to hear this talk. She sometimes asks Ramdas, 'Why do you, great saints, remain like this, simply witnessing everything? You have immense power in you. Why do you not make use of it for the good of the world? You take all that happens in the world in a light spirit and are indifferent. Why not take things seriously and do something concrete to help the world?' Hearing that, Ramdas

would only laugh. She would then say, "Ramdas simply laughs it away saying that everything is God's will, that God does everything for good, that God is everywhere and that it is all His lila." In fact, Ramdas wonders what is there for anybody to do in particular, when everything happens by the will of God. Why should we try to work against His will? If He wills that war should occur, who can stand against it? So many wars have occurred in the world. Did they occur without His willing so? Let us not, however, be silently witnessing whatever happens. Let us send out good thoughts to neutralise evil thoughts."

Ramachandra Rao : "Arjuna was asked by the Lord to fight."

Papa : "This is not a fight on the physical plane. This is purely in the realm of the mind. We have to destroy the inner enemies so that there will be peace in us and in the outer world."

112. Ray Magee : "By intense austerities we develop high psychic power. Will the ego not use it?"

**Love,
the Basis of
Universal
Service**

Papa : "You must not allow the ego to make use of the power. It can and must be transmuted into love. Then alone it can be used for the good of the world. Power can be used either for our own good, or for the good of others. In the latter case it is selfless love. Here the ego is completely absent. When love flows freely, without being obstructed by the ego, it will be for the good of all, for universal good. Whenever you do something without desire for any return, then it is a divine action. You know our ashram stands for Universal Love and Service. It is joy to give to others and it is joy to receive for the sake of others. By doing such service, we are not losing anything, but day after day, our joy increases and our power to give joy to others also grows. So many who come to us find happiness here. It is joy to serve, it is joy to see others happy. It is joy to do good to others."

The bell rang for coffee and the devotees left. Then Papa and S. alone remained in the hall. Mataji was sleeping in the room adjacent to the bhajan-hall.

113. Papa (to S.) : "When Ramdas talks like this about America and Europe, he feels quite fit and energetic to go to those countries."

**Papa
Enthusiastic
about Foreign
Tour**

S : "I thought that, if there was an aeroplane ready at the gate, Papa would have flown off to America straightway."

Papa laughed. He was full of enthusiasm and was talking like a young man of thirty.

Hearing the laughter, Mataji woke up and coming near Papa, asked what the matter was. Papa told her that he had a talk with the American friend. He also referred to the remarks of S. that Papa would have flown off to America straightway, if there was a plane ready. She did not seem to like the talk about a trip to America. A couple of minutes later, Papa said : "Why should Ramdas go so far away? He would go there to change the hearts of the people. If Ramdas cannot change the hearts of people here in the ashram, what is the meaning of his going to foreign countries with that object?"

At this Mataji laughed, saying "Yes! Yes!"

Papa and Mataji laughed together.

January 15, 1953

114. This morning Papa was reading to Mataji a few pages from the **Yogi Milarepa** book *Yogi Milarepa*. S. was also present. Papa told S. : "When reading the book, Ramdas remembers his own wandering days, his life in caves and so on. Very little has been recorded about these experiences in his books."

Mataji who was nearby, getting Papa's clothes ready for his bath, intervened and said, "Papa used to talk to me at Kasaragod for hours together about his experiences. If I had known how to write I would have written volumes on them. In those days I was alone with Papa in the ashram and his food was also sent by a devotee from the town. So I was free to listen to his talks. People from the town were at first coming in large numbers to see Papa, but when they heard I was in the ashram, they stopped coming. In those days Papa's experiences were fresh in his memory."

Again referring to the book Papa continued : "Yogi Milarepa says he had his physical body also divinised. It is written in the book that he did not leave his body behind. It is also written that the Yogi appeared in many places at one and the same time, like Sri Krishna. Divinisation of the body had taken place in the case of Narada, Hanuman and others. Tukaram also, it is said, did not leave his body behind."

Papa now went for his bath.

115. At 10 p.m. in the bhajan-hall. All the devotees had returned to their rooms except a few who were talking to Papa during his usual
Talk of their rooms except a few who were talking to Papa during his usual
Foreign Tour massage.
continued

S. narrated to him the gist of the conversation he had with the American visitor, Ray Magee. Magee had asked S.: 'Through what group or party would Papa speak if he happened to go to America?' S. had replied that, though Papa would willingly accept invitations from any group or party, he would speak to the Americans not as a member of any particular sect or creed, not as a Hindu, Christian, Muslim or even as an Indian, but as one who was above all distinctions of religion, race, nationality, caste or creed. Papa's was universal religion acceptable to all alike. Magee gave him a hint that there was the possibility of Papa being considered as associated with a particular party if he happened to lecture through that party first. The safest thing would be for Papa to be introduced through the universities.

Papa : "Imagine Ramdas lecturing in a big hall, full of university professors, philosophers, and so on and so forth. Do you think they will be able to appreciate or be interested in what Ramdas says? Ramdas well remembers what a miserable failure he was as a speaker in his early years. When he was a student in Bombay, he was a member of a debating society and debates used to take place every week. Ramdas attended all the debates. In those days Ramdas was reading a lot of books and was considered to have a very good knowledge of English. One day, the debate was not interesting, and friends pressed Ramdas to take up one side of the debate, as they knew that he had read some articles the previous day on the subject. Ramdas stood on the platform and tried to speak. Not a word would come out. His mind was a perfect blank. He tried for a couple of minutes to say something, but miserably failed and got down. Nowadays when Ramdas speaks at meetings, words simply rush out of him in torrents. But Ramdas must speak slowly and steadily so that ideas may not get mixed up. When he gives lectures in America, he must use good language and speak like one inspired.

S : "Why like one inspired? When Papa starts talking, the people there will regret they have only two ears each and would wish they had more."

Papa (*laughing*) : "You mean, like the devas who came to witness Sri Rama's wedding and were sorry they had only two eyes each? They were envious of Shiva who could use his third eye also. Indra considered himself most fortunate as, by the curse of Gautama Muni, he had a thousand eyes. Do you think, if Gautama Muni lives now, these people will go in for his curse so that they may each have a thousand ears? God will make Ramdas speak as He thinks best."

Swami Krishnananda : "Why God 'making Ramdas' speak? Will it not be God Himself speaking?"

Papa (*laughing*) : "Do you think Ramdas is such a big man as to be called God?"

Gopal who was spreading the bed for Mataji, suddenly laughed aloud at the last remark of Papa. Papa asked him why he laughed. Gopal replied that he remembered what Papa wrote to Mataji during the last tour about himself. Mataji had not accompanied Papa on that tour, but Gopal had. Papa wrote to Mataji from Palghat that Gopal, who was witnessing the grand receptions given to Papa at various places, had begun to feel that Papa was not an ordinary person. He also added that Gopal's devotion to Papa would increase very much by the time the party returned to the ashram, as he would think then that Papa was much greater than he ever thought.

Reverting to the American tour, Papa said, "Why should Ramdas go to America ? Has he to teach anything ? Everybody is the embodiment of God and what has He to learn ? You are all Gods, massaging his body, and talking to him. God going to meet God—is it necessary ?"

S : "Is it not that the Indian God goes to meet the American God ?"

Papa : "Yes, but this God has not so far moved out of India. He has been moving about only in India. Sometimes He takes ill too." (*Laughter*)

XIV

Anandashram, January 16, 1953

116. After coffee, Papa was sitting on his chair in the bhajan-hall. **What Survives** Swami Ramananda was sitting in front of him and Swami Krishna-
Realisation — nanda to his left. Later on, the American friend Ray Magee,
Divinised M. R. Ramaswami, S. and others came one by one and sat facing
Individuality Papa.

Ramaswami : "S. and myself were discussing last night what sort of individuality or personality survives after one is liberated. Will Papa kindly enlighten us on this ?"

Papa : "Individuality is a very poor word. We must find some other more suitable word for what survives after moksha. Individuality implies the ego-consciousness. When the ego is destroyed, then individual sense also is destroyed, it disappears. That which remains is neither individuality, nor the ego. When the Impersonal is realised, the realiser, the realised and the process of realisation, all become one."

Ramaswami : "Then who survives except the Absolute ?"

Papa : "You are speaking like Sankara ! (*laughter*). There is no survival. This is the mystery. How can these two things be true at the same time ? Therefore some say there is no survival and some say there is survival. None can express clearly what it is and what it is not. To say there is individuality does not seem to be right, and to say there is not, also does not seem to be correct. How can we say anything about the inexpressible ? Buddha speaks of nirvana and Sankara of moksha. What they say seem to be almost the same ; but, according to the Buddhist scriptures, there is a survival of personality in a divinised and subtle form, full of light."

Ramaswami : "Having gone beyond the gunas, how can they retain even the subtle body—a product of prakriti ? Is it transformed into suddhasatva ?"

Papa : "Suddhasatva too is subject to change. It is not permanent. Lord Vishnu is said to be the personification of suddhasatva, which, in a way, is beyond

the three gunas. They could not find a suitable word to describe that state and so they called it suddhasatva. The bodies of Narada, Suka and Hanuman were all divinised. They are all immortals. Hanuman is said to be vajrakaya, possessing an indestructible body. So, such a thing is possible. The state of the jivanmukta is compared to that of a drop which becomes one with the ocean. That, of course, is the state which all jivanmuktas attain. Still there remains a divinised individuality. It is the divine power and will that causes the jivanmukta's body to talk, walk, and move about. His illumined personality persists even after the body is cast off."

117. Ramaswami : "Can we have an eternal embodiment of the
The State of Impersonal ?"
Moksha is

Indescribable— Papa : "The body continues even after moksha. It can remain
Avatars and imperishable. But whatever we speak about an individual's state
Jivanmuktas of moksha cannot be true, because we are judging from without. To
say that there is survival of individuality or to deny it entirely are
both wrong. Even a jivanmukta cannot answer the question, for he also can speak
of it only standing outside. How can he describe what is really inexpressible ? That
is why sages and philosophers differ in trying to express what their ultimate spiritual
experience is. Experiences written by or about jivanmuktas can only take one up to
the door of realisation and leave one there. What is inside the door is a mystery.
One has to get in and realise the Truth for oneself."

Continuing, Papa said, "We have heard instances of some saints having
departed with their bodies. This was said of saints Appayya (*the ancestor of Mataji*),
Ramlinga Swami, Nandanar and Tukaram. The saints continue to inspire and help
thousands of devotees, who have never even seen them. Ramdas feels that it is not
mere imagination of the sadhakas, but the inspiration is real."

Ray Magee : "What is the difference between an avatar and an illumined
saint ?"

Papa : "Avatars who are embodiments of God, specially come down to earth
to show the path of peace to suffering humanity. For this purpose the unmanifest
divine assumes a human form. Avatars have definitely more power than siddha
purushas or saints, who have evolved to the state of jivanmukti or illumination, by a
gradual process from birth to birth. The siddhas also work for the uplift of humanity.
But they are not specially sent, as it were, for the redemption of humanity. Avatars
have greater power, work in a vaster field, and save millions. Siddhas or saints may
be compared to wells while avatars are like rivers in spate. You know, while the
well can serve only a very small area, a river in spate covers a very wide area, and
water is made available to millions of beings. Sri Ramakrishna compares them to a
boat and an ocean liner respectively."

Ramaswami : "If the siddha is one with God, is he not as great as the avatar?"

Papa : "He is not. For the avatar is a special descent of God for the welfare of humanity as a whole."

Swami Krishnananda : "Can the Absolute manifest Itself without a medium?"

Papa : "It can. Absolute becomes the medium Itself."

118. S : "Is there any difference between the personality or
Saint and individuality of the avatar and of the jivanmukta?"
God are One

Papa : "There is no difference between the two. It is the same cosmic power that works through both. As soon as one becomes a jivanmukta, he ceases to have the individuality of the ordinary type; he is the illumined vehicle of God. Ramdas shall tell you a story in this connection. Listen. A boy aged about five, the only son of his parents, passed away suddenly. The parents were very much grieved over the loss. They tried their best to bring the child back to life, but failed. Finally, they went to a saint who was living near, and begged him to pray to God to bring the child back to life. The saint was brought to the house and the dead body of the child was placed before him. Then he was asked to pray. He accordingly prayed: 'O Lord, may You be gracious enough to bring this child back to life!' Nothing happened. The prayer was repeated again, but the miracle did not happen. The saint then, looking at the parents, said, 'I have prayed as you wanted, but nothing has happened. Now watch and see!' So saying he looked at the dead body and said, 'I command you, get up!' That very moment the dead boy revived and got up! The saint had realised his oneness with God. His prayer was really meaningless. To whom was he to pray? There was no God apart from him. He and God were one. His command was the same as God's command and so it brought about the desired effect. The story shows that the saint did not possess a separate individuality from that of God."

S : "But there is difference in the way an avatar and a saint talk. Avatars, as in the case of Krishna, never talked the language of those who were feeling different from God, as one separate from God. But, saints sometimes say that they are God and at other times say they are the children or servants of God."

Papa : "Did not Krishna too worship the images of Narada, Prahlada, Dhruva and other bhaktas? Did he not wash the feet of Sudama? Ramdas allows himself to be worshipped, and sits for bhajan on a high asan like a lord; at the same time he is prepared to wash the feet of you all and prostrate before you. But you do not allow him to do so. When others prostrate before him he sees only God prostrating before

God. When he serves others, his attitude is that of a servant who serves God in various forms. In either case it is God alone whom Ramdas sees everywhere."

Swami Krishnananda : "As we know Papa is God, we prostrate before you and cannot allow you to do so to us. We are only human, and hence your servants."

Papa : "That is your game ; play on ! One day you will get tired of the game and then you will reveal what you really are. Then the play of pretension will end."

119. In the evening between 4 and 5, Papa read to Mataji and some others in the bhajan-hall, a few pages from the book *Day by Day with Bhagawan*. After reading, Papa went out for a walk accompanied by Mataji, Swami Ramananda, Ramkishor and S. Remembering what he had read in the book, Papa said, "When Ramdas read that Maharshi went for bhiksha in the streets of Tiruvannamalai, Ramdas remembered how he himself went for bhiksha, probably in the same street. Ramdas's going to Tiruvannamalai was within ten days of his taking sannyas. After he had darshan of Maharshi, he went and sat in the big temple of Arunachala, when somebody invited him for meal. Perhaps it was the next day that he went and stayed in the cave and was thenceforth coming down to the town daily for alms. His mental condition in those days was simply wonderful. After leaving Tiruvannamalai, while wandering in various places, he was eating very little of whatever was given to him. Once he was sitting with many sadhus for a feast and they served malpuris. Ramdas had only two or three teeth left in his mouth. He put a piece of this sweet cake in his mouth and it stuck in the throat. It would not either come out or go down. He had no water with him and had to tell others, by a sign, to give him some water. He was all right after taking water. Ramdas could eat only a small piece of the puri. Later, the bhakta who gave the feast came to Ramdas, and took him to a cot in a hut and asked him to sit on it, himself sitting by Ramdas's side, rubbing his feet. Ramdas sat on the cot, and chanted Ramnam and was like a blissful child. He had hardly any desire to speak in those days. A sadhu used to take Ramdas with him to different places. In some places they were rebuked by people, while in some others they were shown kindness. When we got food, we shared it between us, and drank water from a well or a stream. Such was the life Ramdas was leading in those days."

120. 9 p.m. The Ramnam counts were entered in the note-book. The total figure of the day was encouraging. After signing the last note-book, Papa tried to estimate how many crores of Ramnam he must have repeated during his sadhana period. Allowing a few hours for talk and so on, he said that he was sure to have done at least twenty hours of Japa a day, and that the repetition went on steadily till the

present ashram was started. He calculated and found that it might well have exceeded seven crores. Continuing, he said smiling :

“Anyway, all may be sure that Ramdas had repeated the number required to get him the vision of God. Now that he has attained Him, he can be compared to a big railway engine which can pull many waggons to the destination. The devotees have only to keep themselves linked with Ramdas, as the waggons are linked to the engine, and they will, in course of time, be taken to the destination. Ramdas had told Mataji that it was for her and others’ sake that he went on these pilgrimages, so that the path for her and others might be made easier. Some of the devotees will not always remain as waggons ; God will make them engines.”

Mataji : “Papa, let me remain a waggon for ever.”

Papa : “No, how can it be? You are already an engine.”

S : “Papa is the engine in front and Mataji is the engine in the rear, like the engines in the train climbing the Nilgiris. One engine pulls and the other pushes from behind. The waggons are therefore safe in between the two engines.”

Papa : “Yes, the devotees are quite safe. But you are not going to be mere waggons. You will all be engines. Those who stay with Ramdas and serve him do not do it for nothing. They must become real engines, more or less powerful, but fit enough to carry a few to the destination.”

S : “Papa’s assurance is very encouraging.”

121. Papa narrated his experiences during the first year of his wandering
Genesis of life, how he was guided from within to do the right thing always
the Ashram and how he spent the time in caves, mountains, holy places of
 pilgrimage and so on. Papa then said :—

“In those days Ramdas was like a live wire. Those who saw Ramdas then, find in him now, an ocean of difference. Many even think that he has fallen from the path by the association and company of Mataji. Many had doubts about the relationship between him and Mataji. They came to stay here and watch our lives. Having seen what was going on here, they regretted having suspected us ; they wept and prostrated before Ramdas begging to be excused for their folly. With the terrible agony of repentance they rolled on the ground. Those were very hard days in the ashram. But we stood firm and faced everything bravely. Sometimes Ramdas was furious in those days and people were afraid to come before him. In fact, he would never have started this ashram if he had not given his word to Mataji. Mataji was solely depending on him. When they left the ashram at Kasaragod, without any

plans, she stood in front of Ramdas and, with tears in her eyes, begged him to permit her to stay wherever he stayed. He gave the permission. She also made him promise that he would not go away anywhere without telling her. And so this ashram had to be founded."

January 17, 1953

122 After breakfast, there was the usual talk with devotees gathered in
His Inner the bhajan-hall. Papa was narrating a few incidents in his life to
Promptings show how he was guided by God at every step.
Willed by
God Ray Magee : "How was God speaking to you? Were you hearing
the voice clearly?"

Papa : "Ramdas considered every inner prompting or external happening as willed by God. He had absolutely no doubt about this. Sadhakas often doubt whether an inner prompting is from God or from their ego. It is hard to decide."

S : "Had Papa no doubt at all about this?"

Papa (*pausing a little in thought*) : "No. Ramdas had no doubts at all, though, sometimes he used to say that he made a mistake. To whom was he saying this? It was to God Himself."

S : "Did Papa have any regret for having committed the mistake?"

Papa : "Yes, at times. But the regret also was by His will. We must be able to enjoy also the rasa (taste) of sorrow."

123. Regarding doubts, Papa continued: "Ramdas remembers
Doubt Ramatirtha's words: 'Instead of having a doubt in your heart, it is
Worse than better to have a bullet there.' Doubt is worse than a bullet. If
Bullet you entertain a doubt, your fall is certain. The state in which there
is no doubt is complete surrender to the will of God. It is through
intuition you know that God guides you in every act. If you are aware that God
inspires you from within and without, then there cannot be any doubt in your heart.
But if your surrender is not complete, you will be badly shaken when you are blamed
by anyone. Only, if your surrender to Him is complete, you will be in a position to
answer boldly that whatever you did was prompted by God. Even if there was room
for any criticism, you would not be affected by what others might say. Jesus was
told that he was wrong in preaching to the people about God and heaven. So also
was Socrates warned for turning the minds of young men from worldly life, towards
the knowledge of the Eternal. Both of them were not afraid of the threats, but

carried on their work, without heeding what the people in high places said. They did not budge from their course as they fully believed that God was inspiring them in all matters and they had no choice as to what they should or should not do. They were prepared to face even death, but would not give up their work. They faced crucifixion and death by poison bravely. This is a sign of their complete freedom from doubt."

Swami Krishnananda: "When we are near Papa, we feel we are free. The moment we go away, we feel we are bound."

Papa: "You are all liberated. Give up the thought that you are bound."

124. The talk then turned on Papa's earlier life and wandering days. **Reminiscences of Sadhana Period** Papa narrated the events leading to his return to Mangalore after a year's journey to sacred places. He happened to come to Hubli for the darshan of Sri Siddharudha Swami and was staying in the mutt. Mother Rukmabai (*his partner in the householder's life*) got scent of this, went to Hubli with her daughter, saw Papa and wanted him to return home. But Papa had gone far beyond the point of any return to the old life. Thereupon she requested Sri Siddharudha Swami to ask Papa to accompany her to Mangalore. Sri Siddharudha Swami called Papa and asked him to go with her. Papa agreed to do so. Continuing the narrative, Papa said, "When leaving Hubli, Ramdas had no plans, no idea of his future. He told Rukmabai that he was but another child of hers. He was playing all the time with her daughter. As soon as the boat touched the shore at Mangalore, Ramdas jumped out and ran away to the Kadri hill. He spent some time there, on the veranda of the Yogi Mutt, and later occupied the Pancha-Pandava Cave. After a few days, Ramdas went to see Rukmabai and was taken to task for leaving her alone at the bund, at which Ramdas simply laughed. She was not very happy about it and made some casual remarks. When she saw Ramdas still laughing, she asked him why he was only laughing at whatever she said. Ramdas told her that he had gone there to make her also laugh. Even from his boyhood, Ramdas was in the habit of taking things easy and laughing them away. Her father came and suggested to Ramdas that instead of running away to the cave, he might be good enough to stay in their house, and that he would give him a separate room upstairs and afford him all necessary conveniences. Ramdas stayed there for two days. He was taking food upstairs. On the second day Rukmabai's father suggested to Ramdas: 'Your sadhana and repetition of Ramnam, if done here at home, will be greatly beneficial to your family and also the other members here.' This suggestion, that he should perform sadhana only for the benefit of the people in the house, shocked Ramdas. When Rukmabai's father left the room, Ramdas came out unnoticed and then vanished from sight. They must have later gone to the room only to see

that the bird had flown out of the cage. Whenever he went there he was asked to stay, but Ramdas never did so.

"One day he was asked to take meal in the house. Ramcharan, a sannyasi, was also with him. When they had taken food, mother Rukmabai said to Ramdas, "By your leaving me, my condition has become very bad. I am left in the lurch with nobody to hold on to." Ramdas advised her to look up to God for help. That was the only way to get over all anxieties. He asked her to repeat God's name constantly and take complete refuge in Him. She was shedding tears. Ramdas gave her some further advice and came away. Ramcharan, who was watching the same, said to Ramdas: 'You are, indeed, a wonderful man. You are a hard-baked brick. You come here, take food, talk freely and play with the child. Still, you are so much detached that even when she weeps before you, you remain unmoved and quietly depart!' Ramdas replied that he was sorry she suffered unnecessarily. When mother Rukmabai met Ramdas again in Bombay, she asked him what he was going to do about the marriage of her daughter. Ramdas asked her, "Who is to marry her off? The responsibility is with God." She complained she had not a single pie with her and asked what she could do about it. Ramdas too had not a copper with him. He laughed and said to her, "Why do not you think of God and leave all matters in His hands? Then everything will go on well." And God arranged things in such a way that the marriage took place soon after, without Ramdas doing anything about it. God is all in all. This is the lesson one has to learn from these experiences. What are we after all? Nothing. When we surrender and leave things to Him, all will be easy and well. But when we take it that the responsibility is ours, and we are going to do so many things, then we get into deep morass.

"After some years, mother Rukmabai came and stayed with Ramdas at the Kasaragod ashram. But her health was not good and the conveniences in the ashram were not satisfactory for her. She stayed there for a few days, but could not carry on."

125. One of the devotees asked Papa how, as a sannyasi, he permitted
Attitude to her to stay with him.
Mother
Rukmabai— Papa: "Why not? Ramdas is but a child of God. He could
The Open freely move with all people in whom he sees only his beloved
Secret Ram. So when mother Rukmabai wanted to stay with him, she was
 gladly allowed to do so. Sri Ramakrishna had his wife staying with
him. He looked upon her as his divine mother."

Swami Krishnananda: "Why, then, did Papa not stay in the father-in-law's house when they wanted him to do so?"

Papa : "They were of opinion that Ramdas should do sadhana in their house for their sake only. Ramdas belonged to the whole universe. How then could he have stayed on in that house?"

M. R. Ramaswami : "It is said that Swami Ramatirtha refused to see his wife when she went to meet him in the Himalayas."

Papa : "Probably because he was a strict sannyasi. Ramdas is only a humble child of sannyasis. If mother Rukmabai were alive now, she would have been staying here. She was very fond of Mataji, who served her so lovingly during her illness. When Rukmabai was in the Kasaragod ashram, she used to tell Ramdas : 'You must give me that bliss which you have got. You must give it to me even if you do not give it to anybody else.' Ramdas asked her to repeat Ramnam. She complained that even though she was repeating Ramnam, she could not get so much joy. She used to say : 'There must be something else which you are holding back from me.' She could not believe Ramdas when he said he had hidden nothing from her. She would come to Ramdas when he was alone and ask him, 'Now tell me what the secret is. I will see nobody else knows it.' However much Ramdas tried to convince her that there was no secret, she would not believe it."

Ramaswami : "Papa has got the secret of secrets, an open secret."

Papa : "Ramdas can only tell everyone how to get at the secret. He can only show the path. The secret to be realised is something beyond expression. Ramdas is not holding back anything in the matter of spiritual discipline from anyone. He has openly told whatever he has to say, in different ways, in his writings and talks. He has freely poured himself out."

Papa was sitting on his bed for the afternoon nap. Ramkishor was sitting a few yards away. His mother casually mentioned how Ramkishor broke and damaged things in the house. Papa called out to Ramkishor and asked him if he was playing the part of Shiva the destroyer now, and when he was going to play the part of Vishnu. Ramkishor replied that up to the twelfth year he would be Shiva and after that would change to Vishnu.

Swami Krishnananda : "If you play Shiva's part too much, you will be locked up in the Dharmashala till you change into Vishnu."

Ramkishor : "If you lock me inside, I will, as Shiva, break the doors and come out."

He then came and sat on the cot by Papa's side. His mother said Ramkishor would be having a close shave the next day like a sannyasi. He said that he would wear ochre-coloured cloth also. Asked if he wanted to be a sannyasi, he said, "No !

But I would wear ochre-coloured clothes for some time, as I like the colour. Then I can be called Shiva Swami."

He sat closer to Papa and asked him, "What was I in my last birth?"

Papa : "You were perhaps Ramcharandas."

Ramkishor : "How do you know?"

Papa : "Ramcharandas also used to love Ramdas like you."

Ramkishor : "Was he growing a beard, or was he clean shaven?"

Papa : "Sometimes he had long hair and sometimes he had a clean shave. He had no beard."

126. 5-15 p.m. Papa started for his evening walk. Mataji and others **Yogi Milarepa** also accompanied him. Addressing Mataji, Papa said, "Ramdas has completed reading the book *Yogi Milarepa*. He has not translated the last few pages to you. Milarepa's end was very interesting. Before he disappeared from the world, he had left a lump of brown sugar and also a piece of cloth with instructions to cut them into four bits and again each bit into four, and so on, that they might suffice for any number of devotees who would come for prasad. They did accordingly, and thousands of devotees got the prasad. Ramdas has also not told you about the earlier portions relating to the Yogi's domestic life ; the ill-treatment he got from his uncle, and how he, in turn, got his uncle into trouble by black magic. He resorted to every kind of mean and brutal act. And to wipe off these sins, he had later on to pass through severe austerities. He was very cruel in his early days, but when he turned Godward, he put his heart and soul into his sadhana and being absolutely dispassionate, reached the goal quickly.

Similarly, we find some persons, who are looked upon as the worst of sinners suddenly awakened, do severe sadhana with intense aspiration for God, and shoot up to the spiritual summit like a rocket. There may be others who are known to be all good, and have been leading a devout life, but who, because of their lukewarm aspiration, make slow progress and reach the goal after a long, long time."

127. 7 p.m. Mataji and Keshav Bhatt came to the office for instruction **Mistake in Bill** regarding the day's purchases. Swami Krishnananda who was in charge of the accounts, then showed Mataji a bill for exercise books brought for Ramnam-writing. The shopkeeper had made a mistake in calculation and had omitted to take into account twelve annas.

Swami Krishnananda : "The shopkeeper has shown twelve annas less."

Mataji : "That is all right. Let him bear a share in the cost of note-books for Ramnam-writing. Let him have that good fortune."

Swami Krishnananda : "But we must let him know about the mistake. Let him give his share knowingly. Otherwise the man who made the bill will get into trouble. It will also be a little awkward for Keshav."

Mataji : "If they ask Keshav about it, he can say that the books purchased were for writing Ramnam and the twelve annas were considered as the shopkeeper's contribution for the same. But if the man who wrote the bill is likely to get into trouble on this account, Keshav will do well to tell the shopkeeper about it tomorrow without waiting to be asked."

Papa was translating into Konkani for Mataji a couple of letters received from Bombay. One was from P. K. Sarangapani Mudaliar who had been admitted in the hospital in Bombay for an operation. The other was from Sri Narottam M. Shah. The letters were full of love pouring out from the hearts of the devotees. In the end Papa remarked : "The devotees from all parts are deluging us with their love, and Ramdas is simply swimming in the ocean of love. He is really drinking the nectar of love. Once a friend said that Ramdas was like sugarcandy in a pot of syrup."

XV

Anandashram, January 18, 1953

128. 8-30 a.m. S. was sitting before Papa with a note-book and pencil in hand ready to take down Papa's replies to devotees' letters.

Sadhana in hand ready to take down Papa's replies to devotees' letters.

Essential

to be Papa : "There is a pile of letters for reply; of course not a big pile.

Conscious of Devotees will be anxiously waiting for a reply. Ramdas used to

Grace reply very promptly. They might be counting days, expecting the

reply. Now they might be thinking Ramdas is too ill to reply. But

they will never think ill of him."

Papa dictated a few letters. There was a letter from Dr.K., which remained unanswered. When Papa was reminded of it, he took it and read one paragraph, which was as follows :—

“In September 1939, Papa wrote to me, ‘Ramdas has held your hand. You are never forsaken. Doubt not, worry not. Ramdas has given you grace.’ Was this true only then ? Or is it true also now ? If it is true now, why is it that I am still assailed by lust, anger and sloth ? Why do I not still feel the eternal joy that is within me ? Why do some devotees consider me a worldly creature ? Why has there been no progress all these years ? I have not yet tasted the nectar that resides in the divine Name. My mind is as restless as ever. I have not known divine peace, nor divine joy. I am conscious that the fault must be in me, but if Papa has held my hand, can this fault yet remain ? Is grace powerless ? Forgive me if I appear ungrateful but I feel very unhappy when I think of all the years that have gone by. I am fifty now and I cannot yet say that I have tasted immortal joy. Do not withhold it from me.”

After reading the letter, Papa said :

“Now the problem is whether one should be entirely depending upon grace. The devotee is not prepared to pass through the discipline which some spiritual guides enforce upon their disciples. They are asked to spend long periods in a solitary cell, repeating the name of the Lord, practically the whole day and night. For this purpose, special arrangements are made and their necessities are provided and service rendered to them in their seclusion. Ramdas has his own doubts about the

efficacy of this sort of enforced sadhana. There are cases of sadhakas who went through such disciplines and have not gained anything appreciably. Of course, there is some light which Ramdas has noted in their faces, but they themselves say that they have made very little progress. The devotee who wrote the letter dreads this sort of external pressure. He feels he is not prepared for it yet, and says that God's grace must work in him without his doing any sadhana. It is conceded that grace is always there, but one must do intense sadhana to become conscious of the grace.

"The devotee seems to be right when he says that he cannot be forced to do any sadhana unless he has the real inner urge for it. The real urge for doing intense sadhana comes only when one has received the grace. Ramdas shall reply him tomorrow."

129. Swami Krishnananda : "What about D's letter? What is the answer?
Celibacy in Why should it have happened ?"
Married Life

Papa : "Do you know what Ramakrishna Paramahansa says about this? A typhoid patient, who is just convalescing, has in his room a jar of pickles. Do you think he will remain quiet without having recourse to it, though he knows fully that it is detrimental to his health? Husband and wife staying together want to observe celibacy. This is, indeed, very hard. That is why, when he asked for sannyas, Ramdas sent him back. He is not yet prepared for the final renunciation. This fall must give him such a strong determination as will enable him to soar up."

130. The letters for the day were over. S. was alone with Papa.
Impatience Continuing the talk relating to the difficulties of sadhakas, Papa
not good said:

"Impatience is not a good sign. One who is impatient for the divine call is far from the call. The call comes suddenly without one's expecting it, when one is apparently not even prepared for it. One may be going on with his prayer and other sadhanas for years, but one may not get the call, whereas a man who never even thought of God is called. This does not mean that one should not be saying prayers and so forth. It only means that one should not be impatient for the call."

S : "Then what is it that a sadhaka should do?"

Papa : "He must push on. One becomes a sadhaka only after receiving the inner call from the divine. Then one feels His guidance every moment. The moment the call is received, life takes such a turn that one has absolutely no attraction for worldly things. One cannot even think of them."

S : "What about those whom Papa referred to as the impatient ones? Are they also not doing sadhana?"

Papa : "Their so-called sadhana is only superficial. The inner awakening is not there. Superficially they may say they pray to God, but inwardly they cling on to the world. They have no real inner thirst.

131. 2-30 p.m. Ray Magee was with Papa in the bhajan-hall. Papa was
Obstacles reading a book which he closed and restored it to the shelf, and
are Imagined looking at Ray Magee said :—

"This morning we were talking about the various kinds of obstacles to sadhana. These obstacles are of our own making, imaginary, the creations of the mind. When people go out in the dark, they are afraid of ghosts. But if the ghosts are not in our mind, they are not out there also. We must have only God in our thoughts. We must see God only everywhere. Then the so-called ghosts or evil spirits are also God for us. In this connection Ramdas will tell you a story. You must have heard of Saint Tukaram. In a certain village there was a big tree on its outskirts and a ghost was said to be living on it. Many people had been frightened by it, and on account of that fear, some of them had even died. Tukaram happened to go to that village. When he was going out at night, he had to pass by this tree. The people of the village warned him not to go near that tree, as many had met with disaster. Tukaram simply laughed and went his way. When he came close to the tree, he found standing before him an extraordinarily huge and frightful figure. Tukaram laughed, and addressing the figure, said, 'O Vithoba ! what a wonderful form you have assumed ! I never saw you in such a form before.' The next moment the form of the ghost disappeared and the form of Vithoba (the image of God in Pandharpur temple) was standing before Tukaram. So, when one sees God everywhere, how can one entertain any fear?"

January 19, 1953

132. 8-30 a.m. Papa dictated a letter to Dr. K. and another one to D.
Fall only in reply to theirs. In the letter to D., Papa advised him not to be
Natural— upset by what he called a 'fall' from his brahmacharya, but to take
Take God heart and go onward and stop not till the goal was reached.
to Task

After finishing the two letters, Papa said, "Ramdas is not in a mood to dictate any more letters today." Continuing, he said, referring to the topic raised in the letter to D. : "Falls are natural. But to condemn oneself or others for this is a great folly, because almost every sadhaka does pass through such situations. We are endeavouring to see God's hand in every act, and to realise that things go on in this world only by

His will. When such so-called 'falls' happen, one should take God to task. By doing so, you get nearer to God. You may ask Him, 'O God ! what is the meaning of your letting me down ? I have been repeating your name and am trying to rely on you entirely. If you do not give me strength to withstand temptations, what is the use of my calling upon you for help ?' Talk to Him in this strain. The effect will be wonderful. You know the incident in Ramdas's life that happened at Pandharpur, when Ramdas took meal at the eating-house.* When he came out after the meal, he saw the hungry man still waiting outside. Ramdas was so much pained at it, that he wondered how God could have allowed him to take food when the hungry man was waiting outside. Ramdas's heart was breaking and he took Ram severely to task. By our putting the blame on God for any lapse, and by the intensity of our feeling about it, God's heart melts and He showers His grace on us. If, instead of this, a man condemns himself for a mistake, he reduces himself to a much lower level. Whereas by putting the whole burden on God and making Him responsible for the so-called lapse, he raises himself higher."

January 20, 1953

133. 10-30 a.m. Papa was taking a shave. In the room nearby an old woman named Devi was lying down on a mat being unwell. "This room is the ashram inpatient ward", said Papa, "as somebody or other who has been ill has been lying here for the past many days." **Thefts in the Ashram** Devi, who had been in the ashram for two or three months, was found weeping at bhajan time the previous day. On enquiry it was found that she had with her a purse which she lost somewhere. She was raising such a hue and cry over this loss that she had to be told sternly to remain quiet and that her money would never be lost. In the next five minutes Lingappa came with the purse which he found near the bathroom. The reaction to the loss had told upon her health so much that she was feeling too weak to get up in the morning.

Papa: "Is this the effect of satsang? She has been in the ashram for some months."

Swami Krishnananda: "If the money was really lost, Mataji would have made it good."

Papa: "Of course, that is what is happening in the ashram. When some of our visitors lose their things, we provide them. Once in a large gathering, about half a dozen visitors handed over their purses to Balaji. He kept them in the wooden box in the office, locked the box and also the office, and kept the keys somewhere on the top of an almirah in a room. All were engaged in bhajan. When the purses

*The incident is described in the book *In the Vision of God*.

had to be returned to the guests, Balaji found that somebody had got away with all the purses containing fifty or sixty rupees each. The ashram quietly paid all of them. There were a few more incidents of similar thefts in the ashram."

134. It was bedtime. Mataji was sitting in the hall. Swami Maharshi's Krishnananda, S. and others too were present. Addressing Mataji, Path difficult Papa said :—
for ordinary people— "Ramdas has been reading to you Sri Ramana Maharshi's talks.

Mataji's View From tomorrow Ramdas will be reading out to you the questions put to Ramdas and the answers he gave during the last two tours. You will be able to find out the difference in the way Sri Ramana Maharshi and Ramdas dealt with the same sort of questions."

Then the following conversation ensued between Mataji and S. :

Mataji : "Maharshi's teachings are all right for advanced jnanis. It is too much for me to understand. How many of the common people can really follow Maharshi's teachings? To start the enquiry 'Who am I?' and go to the supreme source straightway is not easy. One has to go beyond the idea of the body, senses, mind and intellect to reach the source. It is a stage when the kundalini has reached the ajna chakra and has only to rise from there to the sahasrara. Papa never talked to me about jnana for a long time. He advised me to take Ramnam constantly and serve everybody as the form of Ram. It was after some years' practice like this that Papa asked me to sit for meditation."

S : "At that time, did you ever have the idea that you were something other than the body?"

Mataji : "No. I never knew anything about it in those days."

S : "When you were serving everyone as the form of Ram, what did you take Ram to be?"

Mataji : "As all the forms."

S : "Did you not have any idea that He is also the formless, beyond all forms?"

Mataji : "No."

S : "You were addressing Papa as 'Purushottam' Papa. What did you then mean by that?"

Mataji : "In those days I did not understand what it exactly meant."

S : "When did you understand its significance?"

Mataji : "Only after Papa asked me to start meditation and took me into his Eternal Being."

S : "If, as you say, it is so difficult for ordinary people to follow Maharshi's path, then why did Maharshi teach this path?"

Mataji : "Because it was the path which he trod to reach the goal. But in his case, from his very childhood, he was having high spiritual experiences. Perhaps all his sadhanas had been done in previous lives."

In the meantime, Papa was continuing his talk with Swami Krishnananda. Now he wanted Mataji also to hear what he said. Mataji smilingly got up, went and sat in front of Papa.

Papa : "Though the Maharshi talked pure jnana, he bore very great love to all."

Mataji : "Yes, he had very great love for all."

Papa : "Sri Ramakrishna was considered to be a jnani within and bhakta without. Swami Vivekananda was a bhakta within and jnani without. So also was the Maharshi. The Maharshi's path and his way of approach are unique. The enquiry 'Who am I?' is unique. By this enquiry one gets direct to the source of 'I', and the ego disappears completely. Sri Sankara asks us to meditate on 'Chidanandarupa Sivoham! Sivoham!' But Ramdas's path is a simpler one. By devotion to the Lord in His saguna aspect, you are gradually able to go beyond it to the nirguna aspect and lose your individuality therein. To jump into the nirguna Brahman straightway is hard and frightening to many. This path is very difficult, more so for women!"

January 21, 1953

135. 4.5 p.m. A car was coming towards the ashram. Papa and a few
'Laughing others were observing the car from the bhajan-hall. Dr. Max Berkman
Swami' was expected and it was taken for granted that he was in the car.
The car entered the ashram compound. A short figure in a green
suit and a green cap came out. Papa sat on his chair. In a couple of minutes the
newcomer entered the bhajan-hall. As soon as he entered, Papa in a loud voice
asked, "How are you?", with a very broad smile. Dr. Berkman (an old man of 65,
with grey hairs) replied, "I am all right; thank you." He then came near Papa. They
shook hands and each looked very happy to meet the other. Papa asked him
to sit down.

Dr. Berkman : "Do you know, Swamiji, what we people in Europe call you ? We call you "The laughing Swami", and I see him here now. You received me with your characteristic laugh."

Papa : "Have some tea and a wash. The journey must have been very taxing."

Dr. Berkman : "I am tired. I was having fever. What I want is rest."

Papa : "We have a doctor here. Would you like to have some mixture for your fever ?"

Dr. Berkman : "I myself am a doctor and don't like taking medicines."

Papa : "You like to give medicines to others, but not to take it yourself."
(All laugh).

Dr. Berkman : "What do you call your small book that has been translated into French ?"

Papa : "*In Quest of God.*"

Dr. Berkman : "I want to read out some portions to you. It contains wonderful things."

The visitor was taken to the guest house.

August 23, 1953

136. 9-30 p.m. Papa had gone to bed. S. and Motiben were gently
God's massaging him. That day he was feeling slightly giddy while
Wonderful walking, and got tired even after a short walk. The massage gave
Lila some relief to bodily pain. Mataji was resting near the window.
Parvatibai, a Saraswat woman, who had been in the ashram for the
past few months, was sitting near Mataji. Parvatibai was a great devotee of Lord
Krishna and got His darshan whenever she wanted. She spent long hours conversing
with her Krishna. In her childlike manner she sometimes repeated to Papa her
conversations with Krishna. It was always a joy to see them talking about Krishna.

Papa said to himself : "Ram's will be done." After a pause, he continued :
"People say that Ram's will be done. But they go on doing things their own way
and also often think that they do everything. What is the fun ? But who are these
people who say like this ? Are they not Ram Himself ? He prompts all actions,
dwelling in the hearts of everybody."

Parvatibai heard that and, as if in reply to or in confirmation of what Papa had said, observed : "Yes, Papa. He is the one who prompts all to work. But certain people say they are doing everything. They say there is no God and go on arguing about it."

Papa : "Who are those people ?"

Parvatibai : "There are some. They always talk against God."

Papa : "Are they also not prompted to say so by Ram ? Are they not His forms ?"

Parvatibai : "Yes, Papa."

Papa : "So He Himself says through one that He exists, He is great and so on, and through another He Himself says He does not exist. What is this game ? What a wonderful game is He playing ? How does He make us do things ? How does He talk, and how does He give us instructions ? He walks without legs, He speaks without tongue, He smells without nose, He hears without ears."

Suddenly Papa got up and sat on the cot. Mataji also got up, came and stood before him. Looking at Mataji, Papa continued : "See how our mind functions. If we are occupied with something very important, we will not be conscious of an insect bite, a call or even a blow from somebody. We may be looking at a thing, but if the mind is not there, the thing makes no impression and it is as good as not looking. The mind has no ears, legs, nose nor eyes ; but it hears, walks, smells and sees. In the same way, God sitting in our hearts, becomes the cause of all our actions. They say God is seated in the cave of our heart. Where is the cave ? Can you see any cave in the body ? It is full of blood, flesh and bones. Where does God sit in it ? But all the same He dwells in us. We can talk to Him. We have heard of so many bhaktas having talked to God, addressing Him within their hearts, though they have not seen Him at all. They fully believe that He sits in their hearts, and go on talking to Him. But He does not talk to them so easily. It is as a result of their constant longing and deep devotion that He begins to talk to them."

It was past 10-30 p.m. Papa realised that it was getting late, and so got up and went into the inner room. Before he returned, Mataji and S. rearranged the bed and lowered the mosquito net. Papa got inside the net to sleep. Others also retired.

August 24, 1953

137.

10 a.m. Papa was taking a shave. S. was sitting by his side.

**Conquering
Lust**

Papa (to S.) : "In the book that we are reading about Sri Ramakrishna, there are so many things that are not seen in other books

published by the Mission. Yesterday we read about an incident. It seems a young man came to Sri Ramakrishna and told him that he was being greatly obsessed by the sex impulse and wanted his guidance to get over it. Sri Ramakrishna in reply said, 'Is there any wonder in your being troubled by the sex impulse? You are a young man full of vigour. Even I am not completely free from it. To get over lust is not an easy thing. God's name will alone save you from the obsession. So take God's name constantly'."

S : "Papa, Sri Ramakrishna to be troubled by lust ! What is this ?"

Papa : "He says that one day he felt he was free from lust. But the same day or the next day he was troubled so much by what he thought he was free from, and became so restless that he went crying to the Mother for help. One should never have the abhiman that one has conquered lust. The moment one has such abhiman one falls. Sri Ramakrishna has further said that it is easier for a naishtika brahmachari to control lust than for one who has been a householder for some time. The reason, he says, is that a naishtika brahmachari has had no chance to know or enjoy sex, but a householder will find it hard to take his mind away from it. But Ramdas, from his experience, cannot quite agree with the statement."

S : "Some others say that those who have not enjoyed it will be more troubled as it is inherent in everybody, but those who have enjoyed it for some time know what after all it is and, with discrimination, may get over it."

Papa : "Yes, that is one view. Anyway Ramnam alone is the way. Constant repetition of Ramnam is necessary to kill all vasanas."

While talking, Papa was moving his left hand, and the razor was in his right hand. Somehow the left hand struck at the razor and one finger suffered a deep cut. S. immediately bandaged it, applying tincture iodine.

August 25, 1953

<p>138.</p> <p>Significance of Sixtieth Birthday</p>	<p>Swami Aghorananda of Ramakrishna Mission had just arrived. Papa who had gone for lunch to Dharmashala (where Motiben stayed) returned and Swami Aghorananda met him in the bhajan-hall. In five minutes Papa went to bed.</p>
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In the hall were Swami Aghorananda, M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram, S. and a few mothers. That day happened to be M. R. Ramaswami's sixtieth birthday. So he specially performed Papa's pada-pooja.

Papa (to M. R. Ramaswami) : "What is the special significance of the sixtieth birthday ?"

M. R. R. : "A learned pandit told me some time back about it. In the vedic ages, people used to live up to one hundred and twenty years, and the sixtieth birthday marks half the life-span. There is another significance also. The planets, having completed a cycle of sixty years, come back more or less to the same position as they were in at the time of one's birth."

Papa : "So this is the real birthday. Or is it celebrated because very few live up to the age of sixty, and it is considered a rare opportunity to celebrate the occasion?"

M. R. R. : "I don't think that is the reason. Of course, in India many die before sixty. The average expectation of life is somewhere below thirty years."

Swami Aghorananda : "I read sometime back that the average life expectation of an Indian is twentyeight years. People in Europe have the average life expectation of sixty/seventy years, and in some places they live up to an average of eighty years. Papa, why is it that in India life is so short? Are we the lucky ones then who are living above sixty?"

S : "Infant mortality is greater in India and that causes the reduction in average life."

Papa : "Yes, many children die, mainly due to poverty."

M. R. R. : "Yes; poverty, squalor and ill-health."

Papa : "Suppose all the children live; will there not be over-population and shortage of food?"

M. R. R. : "Statistically we can say so. But it is said that the earth can accommodate any number of people if all of them live an honest and plain life, without greed, sharing what they have with others. Then everybody will have enough."

Papa : "People are greedy."

Swami A : "God brings about wars, and millions of people die. See, during the last war how many died in Europe!"

Papa : "If people give up their greed, and have a heart to help others, they can live harmoniously. But they do not do that, and thereby bring about strife and war."

Swami A : "Is it not God who is bringing about disharmony, struggle and war?"

Papa : "Of course, He is the cause of everything."

Swami A : "If we ask Him, He may say it is His prakriti or maya that is causing all these."

M. R. R. : "If God is at the bottom of everything like wars and so forth, then the ensuing suffering belongs, at bottom, to God."

Papa : "Only He appears to suffer on the surface. He never suffers. He is ever in bliss. If we ask Him why He is causing so much misery and havoc in the world, He may keep quiet or say, 'That is my will'. We cannot question His will."

Papa then went to sleep. All those in the hall went out except the one who was fanning Papa.

139. Half an hour past noon, M. R. Ramaswami, S. and others were in the ashram dining-hall to take lunch along with Mataji. But Mataji
Ashram had not had her bath. M. R. R. waited for her, as it was his
Activities— had not had her bath. M. R. R. waited for her, as it was his
Mataji's birthday and he wanted to take food in her company. Others
Comments present sat for meal and when their meal was almost over, Mataji
 and M. R. R. joined them. M. R. R. occupied a seat towards the
western end of the dining-hall. Mataji's usual seat at the eastern end was kept
vacant for her, but she went and sat near M. R. R.

S (to M. R. R.) : "This is your birthday privilege."

Both Mataji and M.R.R. laughed. Others had finished their meal and left. Mataji and M.R.R. were the only two left in the hall, taking their food. S. also stayed on to enjoy the conversation with Mataji, whose talk mainly related to the ashram and its activities.

Mataji said that since the beginning of the ashram, sadhus and poor people had free admission there. They were fed for a few days, and given clothes and other sundries free. This practice had been going on for some years. But she said that, of late, some local people were coming and creating a lot of trouble. There was no end to their demands. So, strict instructions were given to the gatekeeper not to allow into the ashram local sadhus and professional beggars. They were to be given some rice and sent away from the gate itself. When some people were thus refused entry by the gatekeeper, they got wild and were in a fighting mood. They showered abuses on him, cursed him, and cursed the whole ashram. They sometimes insisted on seeing Mataji, as they were sure of getting something from her. So, on certain occasions, Mataji was called to the gate. There she would admonish them for their behaviour, for the confusion and trouble they created in the ashram, and sternly tell them that

they would never be admitted inside. If they wanted, they could take their share of rice and go away. At this severe attitude of Mataji, most of them used to go away without further argument. Some of them used to abuse and curse her also before leaving. Though circumstances forced Mataji to be stern with those people, she was not at all happy over the happenings. She was feeling greatly disturbed at heart for having had to send them away and for not acceding to all their demands.

Mataji : "We must live in this ashram only as we live in other places when we go on tour. When I go for bath and pour water on my head, all these ideas rush through my mind. This morning you saw how many had to be sent away. My whole being is agitated on this account. I often wonder why we started this ashram at all. Instead of our helping them to progress towards God, they are being made to go backward, as it were, when they are asked to go away ; they go with very bad feelings towards us. How harmful it is for them ! And after all, what is the use of our sending them back ? In another half an hour another party came. They were let in and I had to feed them, give clothes and what not. Why did we send away only the earlier party ? When some incident like this happens, all such ideas flow through my mind, as I told you, especially when I am taking bath. At other times my mind is perfectly blank.

"In fact I do not remember many things that have happened in the ashram. Most of the things I did in the ashram have been forgotten, whereas I can remember well what I did before coming to the ashram. I can remember them only when somebody talks to me comparing what I did before with what I do now, such as my love, attachment, anger and so forth."

<p>140. 'Keep Money where I cannot find it'—Mataji</p>	<p>4-30 p.m. Mataji was in <i>the Vision</i> Office arranging the many things kept there. S. went and took from her the cupboard key and soon returned the key saying, "I have kept in the cupboard a purse belonging to Swami Aghorananda."</p>
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Mataji : "You ought to have kept it somewhere without my knowledge. Kindly go and keep it somewhere else ; do not tell me where it is."

S. looked at her and laughed.

Mataji : "I am not joking. You may keep it somewhere else so that I cannot find it."

XVI

Anandashram, August 27, 1953

141. 9 a.m. S. had slight fever since the previous day. So Papa,
Do not followed by Subbaram, came to see S. in his room. Papa sat there
weaken the for some time, enquired about his health, and was about to go. S.
body got up and prostrated before Papa.

Papa : "Why do you get up? You have still temperature and pain in the back."

M. R. Ramaswami (*who just entered the room*) : "It is something like malaria. He might have had the infection in the system. He has been weakening his body, reducing the diet. Now, when the body is weak, it attacks him."

Papa : "Why should you reduce food so as to weaken your body?"

S : "I am taking food twice quite all right. Only in the evening I do not take anything."

Papa : "You may do sadhana, but should eat well ; not that you should overeat, but enough to keep your body healthy."

Subbaram : "Our Rajasthan friend (Shivashanker) has started taking food in the evenings now."

Papa (*laughing*) : "He has become so weak. While singing the bhajan, sound does not come out from him. He looks very pale also. In this connection, Ramdas remembers a sadhu who was living in the Kasaragod ashram. As Ramdas was living on potatoes, he also started potato diet. He was taking four potatoes a day. The sadhu became very weak and pale. One day it began to rain heavily and he was sleeping near the window. Ramdas asked him to pull the shutters to close the window. He pulled and pulled ; the shutter would not move, as it was slightly stiff. Then Ramdas went and pulled it without any difficulty. Ramdas told the sadhu, 'This is the strength you have got by your potato diet'."

"We must not weaken the system. If we do so, we give room for diseases to attack our body. Then how can we do sadhana? So, be strong and resist all diseases."

142. 5-30 p.m. Papa was standing near the flower garden outside the ashram and looking at it. Swami Aghorananda and S. were with him. Francis was working in the garden, spraying D.D.T. solution on some plants which were attacked by insects. Immediately after the spraying, the insects were trying to escape one by one.

**God's Lila is wonderful—
Papa's sense of humour**

Papa : "See, so many insects have been eating up these plants. The moment D.D.T. is applied, they run away."

S : "There are so many enemies to the plants."

Papa : "Of course. there are enemies to everything. The insects are the enemies of the plants and we are their enemies. Once somebody asked Ramdas why God created tigers and all such wild animals. Ramdas replied him that if these animals could talk, they would ask why God created human beings who shoot, kill and destroy the animals."

Swami A : "One animal lives upon the other."

Papa : "If we go to the forest, we shall be fine feast to the tigers there. His lila is wonderful !"

9 p.m. Bhajan-hall. Papa was sitting on his chair facing the asan. He had just finished reading *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master*. In front of him a few mothers were seated. On one side were Swami Aghorananda and some visitors.

Remembering something of what he read, Papa burst into laughter. Others around were eagerly expecting him to crack a joke.

Papa : "Ramdas remembers a funny incident in the Kasaragod ashram. Ramdas was alone there in those days. Visitors from the town used to come, spend some time and return. One day Ramdas was resting after his noon meal. Then some mothers from the town came, and seeing Ramdas resting, sat in the veranda.

"By this time Ramdas was awake, but he was still lying down. He could hear the following conversation going on in the veranda, in a very low tone. 'He is sleeping. Let us not disturb him. Did you see the new bangles I have got ? They are made of sovereigns. Yes, they are nice. Hush, hush, we may disturb him.'

"Just then Ramdas got up and sat on his bed. In a few minutes the mothers entered the room and sat before him. One of them asked Ramdas, 'Will you tell us something about bhakti and how to attain God ?' Ramdas replied : 'We must have love for God, and must remember Him, as we do our gold bangles.' At this answer they were astonished. They started looking at each other's face saying, 'We thought he was sleeping and did not hear what we were talking. See how he has heard everything' !"

Papa continued : "On another occasion, in Bombay at a friend's place, some mothers came and sat in front of Ramdas. A very fat mother was sitting at a distance. She got up from there and came near Ramdas. While walking, her body was swinging like a pendulum and her gait was very slow on account of the bulky body. When she came near Ramdas, she asked, 'Tell me how to cultivate vairagya, and increase our bhakti for the Lord.' Ramdas then remembered the example quoted by Sri Ramakrishna. He said, 'What is the use of hearing about all these ? All come only to hear but not to put the advice into practice. The camel that eats the leaf of the thorny plant, feels the thorns prick its tongue and lips and swears every evening that it would not go and eat those leaves any more. But the next morning it goes and eats the very leaves, and then repeats the vow in the evening. So, knowing is one thing and practising is another.' As soon as the mother heard this, she turned back and went straight to her old seat with the same slow gait and her body swinging as before. She never uttered a word. She went and sat there quiet."

August 30, 1953

143. 3-30 p.m. Mataji, carpenter Viswakarma and Keshav Bhatt were standing on the newly constructed plinth for the kitchen and dining-hall building on the southern side of the bhajan-hall. Mataji was explaining to the carpenter some changes she had made in the plan. Then Papa was coming from *the Vision* office. Mataji called Papa and told him that a change in the plan was necessary and gave reasons for it. Papa laughed heartily.

Mataji : "Why are you laughing ? Are you laughing at me ?"

Papa : "Ramdas simply laughed, that is all."

Mataji : "Even big engineers and contractors make changes in their plans when the buildings are in progress, and what is the wonder in our making changes ? We are, after all, their children."

Papa again laughed, and agreed that the change might be made, and left.

144. 5 p.m. Papa started for the Udyog Shala followed by S. and a couple of others. The paddy crop in front of and behind Udyog Shala had come up very nicely and had flowered uniformly. Later, due to late rains and also white ant trouble, it looked as if the crop had almost failed, but by the prompt care and attention of Mataji, the crop not only did not die but grew up with greater vigour and strength. Papa was extremely pleased to see the crop and remarked: "Mataji is a miracle worker. These plants were about to die. See how beautifully they have come up now !"

After going round the fields, Papa was returning to the ashram. He met Mataji on the way. She enquired if Papa had been to the fields. "Yes," he replied, "Ramdas saw the fields. They are so nice. It is a great pleasure to see them."

Arriving at the ashram, instead of sitting as usual on the cement bench, he turned towards the west saying, "We must now go to Ramana Rao house and see how the marble slab has been fixed. But Ramdas is so tired; he is simply dragging his legs."

After spending a few minutes seeing how the marble slab had been fixed, Papa came and sat on the cement bench. S. brought and placed the foot-rest in front of Papa and gently stroked his legs.

Papa : "Ramana Rao came just in time to purchase that house. He came and saved the situation. Yes. Ram knows how to arrange things. He is certainly a force to be reckoned with. Every minute, nay every second, He is watching the situation."

S : "But He waits till the last moment, to come forward."

Papa : "Now every moment is the last moment for us. First and last moments are the same.

"Tomorrow, being the payment day, Mataji will have a funny time with only five hundred rupees we have. But she is courageous. She is brave enough to face any situation. She knows her banker has infinite wealth.

"This sort of life seems to be good. We shall be able to control our expenses. If we have enough money in the bank, we will be expanding our activities without any limit."

This morning, standing on the plinth, when Ramdas laughed, she was touched. Mataji asked, "Why are you laughing at me?" Ramdas quietly said he simply laughed. He in fact laughed, seeing the way things are going on, and her talk about economy. "Take the case of the septic tank. We have now to do the whole thing again."

S : "Whatever Mataji does is all right, but her talk about economy is contrary to what she does."

Papa : "Still she talks so much about economy and goes on spending in her own way. Ramdas had half a mind to see what she is doing behind the goshala near the cow-dung pits, and to crack jokes with her. But he is tired now."

August 31, 1953

145. 1-30 p.m. After the evening bhajan was over, almost all the
Venomous Snake killed. devotees in the ashram had assembled for Papa's signature on their
A Cat saved Ramnam note-books. A few had already left.

A snake was seen passing across the front courtyard of the bhajan-hall. Some children reported that to Papa. Immediately Papa himself came out and saw the snake. Some said that it should be killed. Papa stopped them from doing any harm to it; he did not want it to be killed unless it was a poisonous one. He asked a workman to see carefully what type of snake it was. He came and reported that it was a very venomous type. Papa then, in the interests of all those moving about in the ashram, instructed that the snake might be killed and removed. It was done.

Half an hour later Swami Aghorananda was talking to S. about the snake, when Papa intervened and said, "It was a very poisonous snake called 'mandali' in these parts. It was well we despatched it to the other world. Otherwise it would have hid itself in the shrubs in the garden and been a source of worry to all."

Gopal (*who was then preparing Papa's bed*) : "It has gone to Vaikuntha."

Papa : "Did it tell you where it was going ?"

Ramkishor came and sat near Papa with a long face and anxious look. Papa asked him to go to sleep.

Ramkishor : "Papa, that cat, that cat."

Papa : "That cat will be all right. You go to bed."

Ramkishor : "Papa, that cat, that cat."

Papa laughed and made him go to bed.

There was a small cat in one of the buildings in the ashram. The poor weakling happened to come out, though it was unusual. The ashram dogs, the enemies of cats, saw and chased it. The cat ran for its life, found a wooden electric-light pole and quickly climbed it and sat quietly on its top. The dogs barked from below, going round the pole, expecting that the cat would come down.

It was to this cat that Ramkishor was referring. It was feared that the cat might die of electric shock if its body happened to touch the wires. Papa was also anxious about it. Then he instructed the engine to be stopped in order to save the cat from the danger. The engine was stopped. Lingappa was asked to get the two dogs shut up in a room for the night, so that the cat could come down and get away. Lingappa returned a few minutes later and reported that he had locked up the dogs in a room. Papa said, "Ah ! Now it is all right. The cat will find its way home."

September 1, 1953

146. 9 a.m. After replying to a few letters Papa and S. went to the
Make an bhajan-hall. A young man was waiting to see Papa there.
honest living

Papa (*to the young man*) : "It seems you are expecting some money by way of help from us."

Young man : "I shall return the money when I go home."

Papa : "Returning or not returning, we have no money to give you. You are a young man, quite strong and healthy. That you should go about doing nothing and asking for money is a matter for shame."

Young man : "No, Swamiji, I was working. I did not receive money, that is all. I was giving tuition. I wanted to do it free."

Papa : "Oh ! That is a very nice type of philanthropy. You want to give free tuition and come to a charitable institution like this asking for help ! It is wonderful. From whatever work you do, you must earn your maintenance and live a simple life. Coming to ask for money from such institutions as ours is no good. You can have meal here once or twice and go."

Young man : "If I have Swamiji's blessings I can reach home all right."

Papa : "Yes. Blessings are there. You may go."

Young man : "Swamiji may please bless me so that I may get some work and I may be steady in it."

Papa : "Yes. You have Ramdas's blessings. Have faith and put your shoulder to the wheel. Make an honest living."

Young man : "May I take leave then ? Please touch me and bless me."

He prostrated before Papa. Papa patted him on the back and blessed him. Then the young man left with his things,

147. 1 p.m. Dining-hall. Mataji was standing at the entrance to the
Inner kitchen. She had just finished her meal. Subramanya Iyer was
attachment coming towards her after washing his hands. S. was behind him.
hard to give Subramanya Iyer took an envelope and gave it to Mataji.
up

Subramanya Iyer (*who had gone in the morning to get his pension*) : "There is one hundred and thirty rupees in it. I purchased a bottle of Horlicks. This is the balance."

S. smiled looking at both of them, one giving and the other taking the money.

Subramanya Iyer : "S. asked me long, long ago—some three years ago—why I should take the trouble of drawing my pension, and not endorse the pension slips and hand them over to Papa authorising him to draw the same for the rest of my life."

Mataji : "Who will part with money like that so easily? It is difficult for one to give away money or land. One may talk about giving them up, presenting them and so on, but in the heart, one will still be clinging to them. The inner attachment for these things is so strong that it is very hard for us to give them up totally."

S : "Is it the strength of our inner attachment, or is it the attractive power of money and land?"

Mataji : "It is only what is within us, that is our attachment for them. In the chalana swarupa (dynamic aspect of God) we get whatever we desire. It is only when we desire these things they attract us."

148. Something in the kitchen drew her attention and after a couple of minutes she continued :
Sri Ramakrishna's concern for his devotee "I remember now what we read about Sri Ramakrishna yesterday. It seems everyday they sent him from the temple, as prasad, a plate full of fruits and another of rice and curry. One day it so happened that the poojari forgot to send the prasad to Sri Ramakrishna. When he did not receive it in time, he was enquiring why it did not come. In a few minutes he was restless. He was walking up and down his room saying to himself why the prasad had not come. One of his disciples there wondered why Sri Ramakrishna should be disturbed over the two plates of Kali's prasad. He was God Himself. Why should he pay so much attention to the temple prasad? But Sri Ramakrishna was becoming more restless. He put on his slippers and went to the temple manager to enquire about the prasad, as all the prasad plates were generally shown to the manager before they were distributed.

"The manager also could not explain why they were missing. But he promised to enquire and do what was necessary. Sri Ramakrishna told him that it was bad if the prasad was purposely not sent to him and he went back to his room. A young disciple who was watching the whole scene was assuming that Sri Ramakrishna, who was a poojari once, had still traces of the poojari mentality (the desire for taking prasad home), and that was the reason for the restlessness. Apparently he had a poor opinion of poojaris. Sri Ramakrishna went to him and said, 'Do you know why I am so anxious for the prasad? It is not that I am craving for it. Rani Rasmani, who has built this temple, has spent so much money on it, and she has also donated a large sum for pooja and so on. If she is to be benefited by what she has done by

way of these charitable acts, good souls should partake of them. The present poojari and others, who take the prasad and make money out of it, spend it in bad ways like womanizing, drinking and so forth. I am anxious that at least a small portion should come here, so that earnest sadhakas and good souls may partake of it, by which alone Rani Rasmani will get any spiritual benefit."

"This was an eye-opener to that young man ; how deep Sri Ramakrishna's love was for the Rani, and how anxious he was to see that proper use was made of her charities."

S : "It is difficult for ordinary people to understand saints. When Sri Ramakrishna was restless for prasad, the young man thought only of the common poojari mentality. But the actual fact, how different and how glorious ! It revealed his great love for the Rani."

Mataji : "Only sadhakas may understand such attitudes of saints. Not all sadhakas. In this particular case, only those on the bhakti path and who had known the value of prasad could have appreciated his attitude. When rich people come here, I ask them for old clothes for distribution to the needy ones. The so-called old clothes of theirs could be used by a poor man for months. But when I take old clothes from them, others make fun of me. The intention is that though the rich people may not give away new clothes in charity, let them at least be benefited by giving their old clothes to the poor. Others laugh at me, but I ask for more old clothes, if they could spare."

149.	9-30 p.m. Ashram bhajan-hall. Papa was lying on his bed.
Funny	Motiben and Mataji were massaging his body. S. came in five
Interlude	minutes and stood near Mataji, who gave place to him and went to rest.

In the course of her talk, Mataji said, "Papa, I noticed there are worms in my stomach. Two have gone out already."

Papa : "Then it is better you take medicine and purgative tomorrow itself. We have Chinnapodium oil in the hospital. Gopal, go and tell our doctor to bring a dose of Chinnapodium oil and castor oil for Mataji early morning."

Gopal went immediately to the doctor's house. It started raining in a few minutes. Ramachandra who was fanning Papa said, "It is raining. Gopal has not taken his umbrella."

Papa : "Let the rain not stop for Gopal's sake. He can take the doctor's umbrella and return. Rain is badly needed."

Gopal returned in fifteen minutes or so.

Papa : "What were you doing there all this time ?"

Gopal : "Doctor was talking about many other things ; something about the sick sadhu also."

Mataji : "Gopal, you must get a pair of clothes for that sadhu. "

Papa : "Get him married also, Gopal."

Gopal : "He is an old man."

All laughed, but Gopal remained calm. He never laughed though all others laughed at his funny remark.

Papa : "If he were a young man, perhaps you would have arranged for it !"

150. It was about to strike ten. Papa sat up, S. went to the shelf,
Belated took his letter pad, referred to something for a while, and returned.
Pada-Pooja Mataji (to S.) : "What were you looking for there ?"

S : "A pada-pooja ought to have been done today. Two devotees have sent money for that. I forgot to instruct the girls about it."

Mataji (to Papa) : "Will it not do if it is done early tomorrow morning ? Today you have thought of them. Will it do or shall I perform it now ?"

Papa : "Yes, that will be a nice idea. When they wanted it to be performed today, it is no good postponing to tomorrow when two of them have specially made the request. They are lucky you are performing it on their behalf. Ramdas will write to them that you did the pada-pooja yourself."

Mataji went inside the room to collect the pooja materials. In the meantime Papa was yawning. He said, "Ramdas is sleepy. You will take a long time for the pooja. For a namaskara itself you will take ten minutes."

Mataji : "No, Papa, I will do it quickly now."

Mataji performed the pada-pooja quickly. She handed over the flower prasad to S. to be sent to the parties, and after distributing the pada-tirtha to those present there she drank the same from a cup. Seeing her drink the tirtha as if she drank water, Papa laughingly said, "All right, drink enough and fill your belly. Those worms that are going out tomorrow may have mukti now itself."

Mataji : "Yes, Papa. Let them have mukti. Perhaps it is for their sake that the pada-pooja was forgotten during the day and specially done now."

She then distributed the lozenges (prasad), one each. There were two lozenges left. She gave one extra to Ramachandra, and before she gave the other to somebody else, Papa said to her: "Now give that one to those chaps in your stomach who are going away tomorrow."

Mataji took it.

Papa : "Now they can go away peacefully. They had tirtha and also prasad."

Papa went to bed and others also retired.



BELOVED MATAJI KRISHNABAI

XVII

Anandashram, September 3, 1953

151. It was close on 1 p.m. Mataji was sitting for lunch when S. and
Bring out all Subbaram entered the dining-hall a few minutes later than usual.
sides of a M. R. Ramaswami had not yet had his bath.
saint's life

Mataji (*to S.*) : "I came today somewhat earlier than usual. Lingappa started serving, but I asked him to wait for some time. Where is Ramaswami?"

S : "He went for bath only at 12-30 when the bell rang."

Subbaram : "S. also went for bath only then, but he finished his bath soon."

Mataji : "What is the matter today?"

Subbaram : "They were both writing a poem on Mataji. They were so much immersed in it that they forgot all about bath and mealtime."

Mataji wished to say something, but restrained herself and was silent for a few minutes. Just then Ramaswami also came and took his seat near S. opposite to Mataji.

Mataji : "When you all write—I do not mean you alone—you touch only upon the bright side of persons and things, entirely ignoring the dark side. Both sides must be brought out, so that those who read what is written may not be misled. Suppose I have a boil on my hand. I know, all of you know, and the doctor also knows, I have pain on account of the boil. But if you write that I have a boil and I feel no pain at all, it is not right. It is sure to create a wrong impression and mislead aspirants who are apt to follow everything in the external life of saints. They will strive to reach a state when they too will feel no pain. If one reads that a saint lived without food, or without using some other necessary things, he too will try to live in the same way. And if he practises what all he had read about the external life of that saint, and finds he is not able to live accordingly and come up to that ideal of tapasya, real or imagined, he will be disappointed. In this effort he will be dragging his mind constantly to the body instead of his being free to meditate on higher things—upon God. Instead of taking the positive course he will be taking the negative course.

"During my sadhana days, I used in the early stages to worry much about my sleep. I had heard that Papa had gone without sleep, night after night. But I could

not reduce my sleep, even by a few hours. One day Papa came to know of it and told me : "Why should you go on worrying about your sleep? Sleep when you feel sleepy. Sit up and meditate when you are inclined to do so. You must not worry so much about matters relating to the body. You must fix your mind on higher things, facing always the sun and turning your back on darkness. By worrying about your sleep and other weaknesses, you are only meditating on sleep and darkness, and will have no time to think of light." From then on, I used to sleep as long as I wanted and never bothered about it."

152. Mataji continued : "When Papa reads out to us from various books
What now, I pay attention to them as a sadhaka would. Only, when I
distinguishes hear something against women, I flare up. Even when I do not
a Saint's show out my anger, I feel angry within. I cannot tolerate anybody
anger condemning women as women. If they wish to mention some
 human weaknesses why should they always attribute them only to
 women? Why can't they speak or write about human beings in general? Why
 discriminate against women ?

"Let me not digress. I was talking about your writing. If, in what you write about me, you say I have no anger at all it will not be correct or fair. A sadhaka reading it would try to become absolutely free from anger and feel depressed if he fails. Of course, one should be free from anger towards others. That is not denied. One can be angry, if at all, only with oneself ; for one's own failings. But one should not fix one's mind on the negative side. One must turn the mind to the positive side. We must also understand saints properly. There is a great difference between a saint's anger and the anger of ordinary people. A saint knows that when he is angry with others, he is angry with himself, because he is one with others. There is no 'other' for him. His anger does not harm him. Those who write about saints must make the distinction clear and not mislead people by saying that saints are never angry."

S : "In what we have written, there is no exaggeration. We have only stated what we see here."

Mataji : "Have you mentioned that I get angry sometimes ?

S : "Yes, we have brought out your anger also."

Mataji now laughed and said, "That is right." Resuming the talk, she said :—

"After all, my anger is like this. You know a mother gets angry with the child to correct the child. Is there any bitter impression left in the mother's heart or in the child's heart afterwards ? Husband and wife have petty quarrels. Do they

mind, do they brood over them? Of course, sometimes, there are exceptional cases. If I find something seriously wrong with a person, I do get angry with that person. It is like a child getting angry with its mother. Suppose a mother tells the child not to tell a lie. But when the child finds the mother herself telling a lie, it then takes the mother to task saying, 'You ask me not to tell lies, but why do you yourself tell lies?' The child has no bitterness in its mind. So the mother also learns from the child, as the child learns from the mother. You are writing your impressions about me or Papa, so that the devotees who are away may be benefited by them. So you must bring out both the bright and dark sides and not mislead readers by exaggerations or one-sided reports."

153. By that time all had finished their meal. They got up and washed
Mataji for a their hands. Mataji, who had still something in her mind, addressing
Simple Life, S. said, "I never wanted the activities here to expand like this. My
Still Ashram idea was that we must give away to the poor and needy whatever
Expanded we got keeping just enough only for our simple living. If there was
 nothing for us to eat, we could go out for bhiksha and be satisfied
 with whatever we got. We must here have only as much responsibility as we have
 when we go out on tour and stay at the various places we visit. A small hut to live
 in would suffice, with no more than absolutely necessary things. I was for such a
 simple life from the very beginning. But the work here went on expanding in spite
 of my wishes. Now, what will others do who try to follow our example?"

S: "If one becomes a sannyasi, his first idea probably is to build an ashram."

Mataji: "That is exactly the thing we wanted to avoid. Now things here have expanded so much. I feel sometimes that, perhaps, this is all due to the desires I might have had in my previous births."

M. R. Ramaswami: "Did you wish that there should be no expansion?"

Mataji: "Yes."

M. R. Ramaswami: "Why do you take upon yourself the responsibility for the expansion of the ashram and think that it was all because of your desires in previous births? Why not consider it as God's will? God willed that such expansion should take place and so it has come about."

Mataji: "Is not what I am speaking now also due to God's will?"

M. R. Ramaswami: "But you refer to your desires in previous births, and so on."

Mataji : "Yes, those desires too I then had because of God's will. This expansion has also come about because of God's will, and I am now talking to you also because of God's will."

154. Continuing, Mataji said, "I do not mean that I am opposed to the continuance of this ashram or other religious institutions like temples, mutts, and so forth. Once they have been started, I am in favour of continuing their work in the right way. But I am not in favour of anybody starting new institutions of this sort. Let them manage well those which have been started already. What is the good of adding to their number by starting new ones, while the old institutions are ill-managed or neglected? In the Datta Mandir at Bhatkal there used to be celebrations of the Datta Jayanti festival for seven days. All the twenty-four hours of the day pooja, kirtan, bhajan, feeding the poor and other functions were going on. But now the original enthusiasm for conducting the festival has waned. Such religious functions and festivals should be conducted, if at all, with joy and enthusiasm. What is the use of celebrating anything half-heartedly?"

September 4, 1953

155. Ganesh and Kishore aged about eight and eleven years respectively were admitted in the ashram elementary school and boarding home the previous year. When the school was closed and all the children were sent home, Mataji graciously took those two boys into the ashram, as they were destitutes. Since April last, these two boys had been living in the ashram receiving all love and care from Mataji. They were very happy and jolly. But as they were going without education, with a view to admitting them in some charitable institution with facilities for their education, Papa wrote to Sri Sraddhanand Ashram in Mangalore and got a reply from Swami Sadananda promising that he would do his best to have the boys admitted. He also enclosed two forms to be filled in and returned to him for placing before his committee. So Papa was collecting the necessary information about the two boys to fill in the application forms as desired by the Sraddhanand Ashram.

Ganesh was originally admitted in the Ashram school at the request of his mother, who did not want to keep him. She said that his father was not alive. But the boy himself said that his father was in Kanhangad, working as a driver! So there was some confusion.

Kishore had been brought to the Ashram by his father, a wandering sadhu. He was in favour of Kishore being looked after in the ashram or sent to any place where

he could continue his studies. Kishore's father would come to the ashram once in a while for a short stay. He had been there the last three or four days.

156. It was past 8 o'clock in the morning. Papa was sitting near the radio listening to the news. M. R. Ramaswami was sitting in front of Papa. The sadhu (Kishore's father) came and bowed down before Papa.

Sadhu : " Mataji asked me to come here and see you."

Papa (*switching off the radio*) : "We want to admit your son in the Sraddhanand Ashram in Mangalore. So we want to know his date of birth."

Then the sadhu gave the month but he was not sure of the year he was born. However, he mentioned some name in Tamil. Papa, on referring to the almanac found there was no such year mentioned anywhere in it. Then the sadhu said, "You may put any year. It does not matter."

Papa had a hearty laugh over the sadhu's remark about the year, and said, "If he did not know, he could have said so. Why should he give incorrect information? These people do not hesitate to tell lies at all." He again laughed continuously for about two minutes, in which M. R. Ramaswami also joined heartily.

M. R. Ramaswami : 'There is an instance mentioned in *the Chhandogya Upanishad*. A boy went to a gurukula, which was intended only for brahmin boys. The rishi there enquired about his parentage, etc. He gave the name of his mother, but could not say anything about his father or caste. The rishi sent him back to get all the necessary information from his mother. The boy went and asked his mother. The mother in reply said, 'Son, I cannot exactly say who your father is. I was the mistress of many a young man and I do not know of whom you were born.' The boy went back to the rishi and told him exactly what he heard from his mother. The rishi was supremely happy to hear such a frank statement from a boy about his parentage, and remarked : 'The fact that you have made a frank statement about your parentage, instead of concealing it for fear of being despised by the world, proves that you are born to a brahmin. I have no more doubt about it. From now your name will be 'Satyakama Jabali'.'

Papa : "Are there such stories in the *Upanishads* also?"

In the evening Papa was standing near the septic tank, which had been completely demolished and was being reconstructed. He wanted S. to bring the

sketch of the tank and a tape. S. brought them and sat beside Papa, watching the construction. The boy Ganesh also came and stood near Papa.

S : "Papa, did Keshav bring any information about Ganesh's parents?"

Papa : "No, his mother is not here. She is in Kasaragod."

S : "What about his father? It seems he is in Kanhangad."

Papa : "Even if he is there, he won't say anything, because he never married the boy's mother." (*Papa and S. laugh*).

S : "These are the most unwanted children then. Their parents never wished them to be born, and somebody takes care of them too."

Papa : "There may be any number of children like this. Who takes care of all of them? God alone was responsible for their birth; was He not? Why did He bring about the union of the man and woman? He brought about the union and the child was born. So God is responsible. He is behind everything and it is His responsibility to look after the children. Whose else is it? There is no need to go into the question whether the man and the woman were married. Whatever that might be, when they united, the child was born. God does not see whether they were married or not. The so-called marriages, registrations and homas in the vedic way are all man-made conventions. Man has made them only for the upkeep and solidarity of the society he himself has set up. In God's eyes there are no such things as our conventional marriages, betrothals and so on. What about the animals? Do they get married? We have cows and bulls here. They grow up, and at the proper age they unite and calves are born; we take their milk all right, and it is very sweet. We don't give it up because it is from an unmarried cow. Do we?"

Both had a good laugh.

S : "Because of these complications, this boy will have no attachment to his parents, whoever they are."

Papa : "What of that? He will get attached to somebody else. Attachment is there all the same."

When we ponder over Papa's above remarks about the so-called legitimate and illegitimate children, we see that the distinctions exist only when we look at them from a lower plane of existence. But from Papa's standpoint he saw no such distinctions anywhere, and he maintained that attitude quite naturally all through and under all circumstances and conditions.

September 7, 1953

157. The new room for Papa's occupation was getting ready. There was
God gives some unforeseen delay in the completion of the bathroom. The
and God commode and its fittings did not work properly. No plumber was
takes away— available. Papa was hurrying things up so that the room could be
enjoy all occupied on the 12th, Vinayaka Chaturthi day.
situations

8-30 a.m. Papa and Swami Aghorananda were standing in the bhajan-hall. S. came and joined them after breakfast.

Papa (to S.) : "Ramdas is not going to dictate any letters today. He is bent upon getting the flush-tank set right. Let us go there."

He then went to the new bathroom where the fittings were placed. Swami Aghorananda was with him, and S. followed a few minutes later. Papa was examining some of the parts, keeping a big cylinder-like thing in his hand.

Papa : "Ramdas finds great joy in fitting things himself. He makes mistakes, corrects and again goes wrong, but finally he is successful. So we have had a lot of fun with the commode and the bathroom."

Swami Aghorananda : "But a lot of money is spent unnecessarily !"

Papa : "Of course a lot of money is spent. But who gets all the money and who gives the money ? It is God giving money through His various forms and God Himself taking it away in various other forms. He finds money for Himself to take."

S : "So let us have only the joy of it."

Papa : "We must have all the joy. Ramdas enjoys everything ; whatever may happen, he is happy. You see the present dye-house. We had four looms there. One day the whole thing caught fire. Ramdas could see the flames clearly from the ashram. It was one of the rare sights one could see. Ramdas was almost in ecstasy to see the flames rising high. He was calling all those near about to come and watch the fun. Sadanand Nagarkatti, who was then the manager in charge of that department, came running to Ramdas, greatly upset, and said in great hurry, 'Papa, Papa, our weaving shed is on fire. Please come immediately.' Ramdas heartily laughed and told him, 'Look here. Why do you get so much upset ? Calmly watch that beautiful sight. Don't miss this sight. You know Ram does everything for the best. Why do you then feel dejected ?'"

Papa continued : "Hearing Ramdas speaking in this tone, he was abashed, and went away to do what he could to put out the fire. Poor chap could not enjoy the

sight. Within ten days after the fire, a friend from Ahmedabad came to the ashram. He heard the news about the fire and donated two thousand rupees for the purchase of ten looms ; and in a short time another friend came forward to construct a building for the Udyog Shala, and donated a sum of twentyeight thousand rupees. Ramdas called Sadanand and asked him, 'What do you say now ? You missed the beautiful sight of the fire the other day. See what has happened now ? Instead of four looms, Ram has arranged for 10 looms and a big building instead of a small shed.'

"Yesterday morning our doctor came to Ramdas so much excited that he found it difficult even to talk. He said, 'Papa, last night there was a theft in the hospital. Somebody had broken open the door, got inside and taken away the ice-box. Papa, will you come there now ?' Ramdas said, 'Don't be anxious or excited. Ramdas cannot come now. He has some work and then he has to look into the correspondence and so on.' The doctor went away and reported afterwards that the ice-box was found lying outside and after all nothing was lost. The thief had apparently come for money. When he did not find the money box (charity box) on the table, he thought it was inside the ice-box. But he was disappointed. The cash-box had been sent to the ashram the previous night for opening. We must enjoy all situations."

Papa was again looking into some spare parts of the commode.

S : "The Western type of closet is very complicated."

Papa (*laughing*) : "The Westerners are making our lives also complicated. In the olden days we used to go to some field and relieve ourselves. Now you see all sorts of complications. This is all because we went in for the Western type of commode."

Then Keshav Bhat came and tried to fit the parts together. By the afternoon the flush-tank was functioning properly. Papa tried the flush-tank and found it satisfactory.

Papa : "You know this has been so much in Ramdas's mind that he did not even sleep in the afternoon. Now one by one the problems are being solved. Perhaps in three or four days the septic tank will also be ready."

September 8, 1953

158. 10 a.m. Four men were seen standing near the gate, with some
They come, musical instruments in their hands. Ambu, the gate-keeper, had
for what ? refused them admission. But they were discussing and arguing with
 him. Papa could watch that from the bhajan-hall. Asking them to
stand near the gate, Ambu came to Papa and asked him if he should admit the four
men who said they were musicians and wished to sing in Papa's presence for about

ten minutes. Papa asked him not to admit them and said, "They only say that they want to sing before Ramdas for ten minutes. But when they once come in, they worry us for all sorts of things. They want this and that, and finally money also. Do not let them in." Ambu returned with the message and was apprising them of the same. Just then two more arrived at the gate. One had a red shawl covering his body, long hair and beard, and face besmeared with ash. The one following him was in white clothes.

Papa (*looking from the bhajan-hall*) : "Now another big sannyasi is coming, followed by his chela. These are the sannyasis who curse us."

S : "Are they of the Durvasa type?"

Papa : "Yes. They are of Durvasa type. We cannot admit these people. They say they come for darshan. Once they get in, they do not want to see Ramdas at all. They have a square meal and, when we tell them they have to go, they become furious, curse us, and sometimes we have to force them out. Let them curse us from the gate itself and go away."

Mataji came to the front of the ashram and watched for a while what was happening near the gate. Papa told her that he had given instructions to Ambu to send them away. She said she would herself go to the gate and ask them to go away.

Within ten minutes she came to the bhajan-hall and told Papa : "They are so anxious to sing for at least ten minutes before you. They promise they will all go away after that. They do not want even to take meal. Papa, I shall ask Ambu to allow them for ten minutes. The sannyasi also pleads for the same."

Papa : "It is an utter lie they are telling. They will not go in ten minutes as they say. It is all a ruse to come in."

But as Mataji appeared to be very anxious to allow them for ten minutes, he agreed. Mataji asked Ambu to let them in. Papa then went inside the room for his daily massage.

The four people with musical instruments came and started singing. The bearded sadhu came and sat near the radio; his chela stood near the door. The songs went on for about fifteen minutes. Papa came out after the massage and sat on his asan. The newcomers did not show any sign at all of their pretended anxiety to have darshan of Papa. The bearded sadhu sat all the time with his head down; he never even cared to look at Papa. After sitting for about five minutes, Papa asked the newcomers to stop their songs so that the usual bhajan might go on. In spite of his asking, they did not stop. Papa got up from the asan and went for bath. Going down, perhaps he told Mataji about it.

Mataji was very anxious to see that those people got away without creating trouble. She came up to the bhajan-hall and told S. to ask them to stop their singing. The singing stopped. They showed no sign of going away. Papa came back after bath. Bhajan was over. The dinner-bell had been rung. Mataji also was watching the situation. None of them paid their respects to or had a word with Papa. Mataji, however, did not like to ask them to go away without their taking meal, but at the same time she was anxious they should not stay longer. She called and instructed Subbaram to take them for meal, to be with them till their meal was over, and to take them out of the gate direct from the dining-hall. After meal they went away.

When Mataji was taking meal, referring to these incidents, she told S. : "I was not sure those people would go away without creating trouble. Somehow they left the place after meal. Don't you remember what all they said before getting in? They said they would sing for ten minutes in front of Papa and go away, and they would not take meal. Did they behave as if they were anxious for Papa's darshan? They never spoke a word to Papa. And the bearded sadhu—Papa alone must describe it—was all the while sitting, his face down as if he did not wish even to see Papa's face. In the early days of the ashram, Papa used to say that the ashram was mainly for the sake of sadhus. Papa liked to serve them and took great joy in doing so. He also used to feed some sadhus with his own hand. See how by their behaviour they have changed Papa's attitude. Now he does not even want to see them, but wishes to send them away even from the gate itself."

159. 9-30 p.m. Papa had gone to bed. His body was being massaged.
No Faith in Simple Path Mataji was also resting nearby, a few feet from the asan.

Papa (to S.) : "There is a Sanskrit sloka published in *The Vision* of this month about the glory of Lord's name. It is said in it that Name alone has the power to grant us the highest state of liberation."

S : "Yes. It is a sloka taken from *Srimad Bhagavatam*."

Papa : "When there is so much power in the Lord's name, why should people still run after various other sadhanas like pranayama, yogic practices and so on? They do not take this most simple path."

S : "During the tour, somebody asked Papa why people do not take to the repetition of God's name even though it is very simple. Does Papa remember the answer?"

Papa : "No. What was Ramdas's answer?"

S: "Papa said, 'Because it is too easy'."

Papa: "People do not have faith in easy and simple paths. They prefer to follow those hard paths, break their heads, get their brains deranged; after all for what? Only to get a certain amount of mental stillness. If they take God's name, all their vasanas will be rooted out and their mind will become pure. But people do not want it."

S: "To have faith in Ramnam is not an ordinary thing."

Papa: "Not an ordinary thing. By God's grace alone we get it. Otherwise it appears as if we have faith, but it shakes now and then under trying conditions."

XVIII

Anandashram, September 9, 1953

160. It was past 9-45 p.m. Papa was sitting on his bed with a paper in
"You are his hand.
running the
whole Papa (*addressing Mataji*) : "Look here, Gopal has given Ramdas a
Universe!" bill for five hundred rupees for the cloth that you had purchased
 from the Udyog Shala during the last four months, for free
distribution to poor devotees and sadhus."

Mataji : "So it comes to only about one hundred and twentyfive rupees a month. That is all right."

Gopal : "Papa, five hundred rupees is not the total of the bills together. It is only the total in one particular bill. There are four bills like that. So the total for four months is over two thousand rupees. Added to the previous outstandings, the total on this account alone comes to four thousand rupees.

Papa : (*heaving a sigh*) : "Ah ! Two thousand rupees for four months ! Krishnabai, what do you say now ?"

Mataji only laughed.

Papa : "When Ramdas heard that figure from Gopal, his breath stopped. He got Kumbhaka. His breath went up and stopped at the sahasrara ; he came within an ace of nirvikalpa samadhi. If the breath does not stop on hearing such news, when will it stop ?"

Saying this, Papa burst into laughter. Laughing and laughing Papa's face became red and he was profusely perspiring.

Mataji : "You are making fun of me."

Papa : "Not at all. You are spending as you like, liberally. And no wonder. For, you are running the whole universe ! But you should get also as you give."

Mataji : "Getting, you must do. It is your job to get things. I can only give."

Papa : "If you go on giving like this, and do not pay the outstandings, how can yarn be purchased and the work carried on in the Udyog Shala?"

Mataji : "Let Gopal have some faith. Everything will be all right."

Gopal : "I have faith."

Mataji : "Deep inside you, there is some fear that I may not clear my outstandings. Give up that fear."

Gopal : "I have no fear at all."

September 11, 1953

161. 12 noon. Papa had just stretched himself on his bed for his
Unreserved midday nap in the bhajan-hall. He was facing west. On the eastern
Faith in Papa side, outside the window, a middle-aged man came and stood. S.
and his ways asked him why he was standing there. Then Papa turned towards
him and asked what the matter was. Replying in a rough tone, he
said :

"I had been to a village nearby, about a mile away, to see if I could get some work there. There was no work and I am returning to Kasaragod. On the way I thought I might take my food here and go."

Papa : "What do you think this place is? Is it a hotel, or have you kept a deposit here so that we may give you meal whenever you come? You seem to claim a meal here as a matter of right. You cannot have it. Go and take food in a hotel. You seem to talk in a way which suggests that you have a right to have food here. We cannot feed such arrogant people. You may go."

Stranger : "Please excuse me if I have said anything wrong."

That he said so low that Papa did not hear it. Saying this, the stranger took his bag and went towards the gate. Papa was making some observations about the arrogant behaviour of the stranger and the way even sadhus who came here sometimes told lies for getting meals.

S : "But if Mataji were here, perhaps she would have made Papa agree to give him food before sending him away."

Papa : "She might have done so. And there is also the rule that anybody coming at mealtime, whether he is a deserving one or not, should be fed. But that

should not be applied in all cases. By feeding such arrogant people, we shall only be ruining them."

Just then Mataji came to the hall. Papa narrated the whole story to her.

Mataji : "If he had behaved to me so arrogantly, I too would have sent him away without feeding him. But if he had apologised, I would surely ask him to take his meal and go."

Papa : "If he had apologised, Ramdas too would have asked him to take meal."

Motiben : "Yes. He apologised, Papa."

Papa : "Did he? Ramdas did not hear it."

S : "Yes, Papa. He did apologise, but in a low tone. Papa went on talking and therefore did not hear him."

Papa : "He could as well have spoken it clearly and aloud."

Mataji : "Shall we call him back if he is near the gate?"

Papa nodded in agreement. Mataji, accompanied by S., went towards the gate, called the gatekeeper Ambu, and asked him, "Did you see anybody going out during the last ten minutes?"

Ambu : "No."

S : "A man of about fifty years, with a white shirt? I saw him going down towards the gate. Where could he have gone so soon?"

Ambu : "So far as I know, nobody has passed through the gate for the last few minutes."

So nothing could be done. Mataji and S. went back to the ashram. Papa went to sleep and others came out to go to the kitchen.

Mataji (to S.) : "You see, such instances are apt to disturb the minds of ordinary sadhakas easily. Unless we have the strength to accept without reservation everything about Papa, and believe that whatever he does is for good, it is hard to face such situations as this."

S : "Yes, unless we are prepared to accept everything without any inclination to judge, it would be indeed very difficult. Our minds should not have the impression that Papa will do only such and such things and will not do such and such things. It must be trained to think that whatever Papa does is only for the best."

Mataji : "The mind must be so trained from the very beginning. But it is very hard. In the early days, however much I tried to control myself, I got terribly upset sometimes by such things and my mind used to be affected like clear water becoming muddy."

September 13, 1953

162. 4 p.m. A car brought to the ashram C. Ramachandra Rao and
How Likhit C. Lakshmi Narasimhiah from Bangalore, with a lot of luggage. Papa
Japa Yajna came to the bhajan-hall and saw both of them waiting there.
started

Papa (*to Ramachandra Rao*) : "How are you? You have come a day earlier. How did you manage it?"

By this time Papa had come near him and was patting him on the back, when Ramachandra Rao bowed down. Lakshmi Narasimhiah explained they had to start a day earlier to suit the railway reservation.

Papa : "You are very weak still. You must now go and have something, after a bath if necessary."

The guests were escorted to the bathroom and dining-hall. Ramachandra Rao was ailing for the last two months from heart trouble. After discharge from the hospital, he thought the best place to rest was the ashram and therefore came down with permission from Papa. They were accommodated in a room very near the bhajan-hall, so that Ramachandra Rao need not exert himself in going to the bhajan-hall.

Some of the baskets brought by Ramachandra Rao were sent by him to the kitchen direct. They were all opened in the kitchen and found to contain vegetables and fruits sent by a devotee, from Bangalore. They were sorted out, put in separate baskets and taken to the bhajan-hall to be shown to Papa.

Seeing them, Papa said, "So much! All vegetables and fruits! The friend is not an ordinary man. Whenever he sends vegetables he sends basketsful. Lot of fruits too."

The baskets were then sent to the kitchen.

Papa : "Have you had your bath and food?"

Ramachandra Rao : "Yes."

Papa : "How do you feel now?"

Ramachandra Rao : "Tired a bit, due to the long train journey. After a couple of days' rest I shall be all right."

Papa : "Come on, let us sit here. You can see Ramdas's new room also."

Papa then took them to the new room. Papa sat on his chair and they also sat on the carpet by his side.

Ramachandra Rao : "Papa, this has become quite a spacious room. I did not think it would be so nice."

Papa : "This is all Mataji's plan. You know she is an expert in house-planning. We occupied the room only yesterday, Vinayaka Chaturthi day."

The talk then turned to the Likhit Japa Yajna.

Ramachandra Rao : "If I were in better health, I would have worked hard in Bangalore to enlist more members for this japa yajna. Unfortunately, I could not do it."

Papa : "That does not matter. Now you can do your japa writing here. This is the place for it. Ramdas has a long letter from S. G. Narasimhiah. They are meeting in Bangalore today at Krishnaswami Iyengar's house, and there he will explain in detail the japa yajna to all the devotees.

"There is much enthusiastic response from all places in India. Many write to us asking to be enlisted. It will be a wonderful success.

"Do you know how this was sponsored? The suggestion first came from U. Sanjiva Rao in Bombay. He was under the impression that the Silver Jubilee celebration of Mataji's renunciation was to be celebrated in October that year. He wanted to collect money and present a heavy purse to Mataji on that occasion, and wanted Mataji's and Ramdas's approval for the same. When Mataji heard this, she said that no such thing should be done. She said we should not go about begging for money any more. We have taxed our devotees enough and we should not press them any more. We should not go on sucking the sugarcane until we reach its top end. When we reach the top end we shall find it no longer sweet. She then suggested that instead of worrying about money, let them all together write twenty five crores of Ramnam. This hint was seriously taken up by Ramaswami (Editor of *The Vision*) and all of us put our heads together and decided to start the yajna."

September 14, 1953

163.
**Mataji on
Invidious
Distinctions**

10 a.m. Papa and S. were in the bhajan-hall. The telegraph peon brought two express delivery letters. S. received them and Papa opened and read them.

Papa : "What is Ramachandra Rao's diet?"

S : "When I asked him yesterday, he said he takes normal food. Perhaps more nutritious food will do him good."

Papa : "You may tell Mataji that Ramachandra Rao may be given the same vegetable curries as are prepared for Ramdas. The friend from Bangalore writes that he has sent vegetables to the ashram and that these should be used solely by Ramdas, Mataji, and Ramachandra Rao. If she is not told about this, she will dispose of all the vegetables. It is better she keeps something for the next few days. The friend writes that he will be sending more."

S. went to the kitchen and saw Mataji busy and happy cutting the vegetables in large quantities. He informed Mataji of Papa's wish that Ramachandra Rao be given the same curries as were prepared for Papa, and as he might not like to take only curries without chillies it would be better if he was given also the ordinary curries with chillies.

Mataji : "Today we are preparing the same vegetables for all. From tomorrow we will see."

When Mataji came to the new room Papa told her, "The friend writes that he has sent these vegetables only for three of us: Ramdas, yourself, and Ramachandra Rao. So don't use up all the vegetables."

Mataji did not reply.

1-30 p.m. Papa and S. were in the bhajan-hall. Papa saw a European coming, carrying his baggage himself, and asked S. to receive him. He came near Papa and introduced himself as David Haggot. He was coming from Hassan. After the formal meeting, S. took Haggot to the bathroom for a wash and then to the dining-hall.

On entering the hall, S. asked Kunhambu (the server) to serve Haggot. Kunhambu replied that rice and curries were again under preparation and it would take fifteen minutes more.

S. was surprised as there never had been an instance like that before in the ashram, and it was not too late. Mataji, who was in the kitchen, came to the dining-hall and told S. that it would take fifteen minutes for the meal to be ready.

S : "Have you had yours?"

Mataji (*smiling*) : "No. I am also waiting."

S : "How did this happen today? Were there any extra guests?"

Mataji : "No. The person who sent those vegetables did not desire our partaking of them. That is why everything went short."

S : "But he wanted *you* to. You are also made to starve for some time now."

Mataji : "What is the meaning of my eating when others have not? That is why I also could not eat the vegetables."

S. was unhappy to see Mataji and also the new guest still waiting for meal. Mataji, S. and a few others would usually sit for lunch at 12-30. That day by that hour Mataji had not even had her bath. She told S., "I am not sitting for meal with you today."

S : "Why? Have you not yet bathed?"

Mataji : "I went to the kitchen to see that food was sent to Ramachandra Rao properly. When I came back, these children Subramania, Kishor, and Ganesh were playing with heavy stones. So I sent them away from there and was somehow detained. I may be very late; you do not wait for me."

S. was none too happy to sit down alone, to lunch. He recalled Mataji's silence when informed that the vegetables were intended only for three—Papa, Mataji, and Ramachandra Rao. The invidious distinction had caused immense pain to Mataji. Happy she was at receiving plentiful supply of vegetables; far more happy to prepare and serve it to all in the ashram. The express letter restricting their use had caused such an anguish in Mataji's heart that it could not but be strongly expressed in her face. She was sorry for the devotee, who, unwittingly perhaps, had injured himself for lack of a wide outlook. Littleness in anyone, anywhere Mataji could hardly tolerate. Such errors arose out of lack of proper understanding of either Papa or Mataji, what they personified and what service to them meant. It was one thing to present, out of love for either of them, something of lasting value for personal use, but quite another for love and devotion to find expression in the way it did with the vegetables.

164. 9-45 p.m. In the new room. Papa was about to turn in. S.,
Be a Jnani- Motiben, Parvatibai, Subbaram, Gopal and Shivashanker were in
Bhakta the room.

Shivashanker (*in Hindi*) : "The Lord has created the jivas and the world, and has put them all in a mess."

Papa : "Those in the mess are none but the Lord Himself. All jivas are He. This knowledge must be there along with the devotion for God. The Lord says in *the Gita* that there are four types of bhaktas—arta, jijnasu, artharthi, and jnani—among

whom jnani is considered to be the best. So we must become jnani-bhaktas. The jnani-bhakta has the knowledge of the Reality and also has devotion. He knows he is one with the Eternal and yet keeps up his individuality to enjoy the sweetness of devotion. Such a bhakta alone is free from the pangs of viraha. He won't have to weep or cry."

Motiben : "So a jnani-bhakta will never have to weep. Is it a fact?"

Papa : "Why should he have to weep?"

Subbaram : "We hear there are some who get the vision of Krishna whenever they want. Is that true?"

Papa (*pointing to Parvatibai*) : "This mother is one of them."

Subbaram : "How does she see?"

Papa : "You must ask her." (*laughs*).

Subbaram : "Do they see Him always or"

Papa : "You must ask her. (*laughs again*) These visions are possible if our mind is concentrated on such forms."

There was a lull for sometime.

Papa : "When a parrot is taught to repeat Ramnam, it goes on saying, 'Ram, Ram, Ram', but the moment the parrot sees a cat coming near it, it is terribly frightened, stops Ramnam, and starts crying, 'ke, ke, ke'. There is nothing gained by repeating Ramnam like that."

Motiben : "When Ramnam is repeated, why should the cat come?"

Papa : "If it is repeated parrot-like, the cat may come. But even when the cat comes, if the repetition continues without any fear, the cat will not do any harm."

Motiben : "Papa, you make us get into hot water by imposing various conditions. Sometimes you say, somehow or other if a person repeats Ramnam at least once in his life, he is saved. Now you say he should not repeat it like a parrot. You again say that Ramnam has no effect if it is repeated without concentration. So, if you go on imposing more and more conditions, what are we to do?"

Papa kept silent for a few minutes, then said, "Anyhow you must repeat Ramnam," and laughed.

165. 9-30 a.m. After dictating replies to a few letters, Papa came out of his room. As Ramachandra Rao was not permitted to move out, **Mataji's Account-Keeping—the Humorous side to it** Papa thought he should go and sit in his room for some time. Accordingly Papa accompanied by Subbaram went to his room and began to talk in a very humorous way about Mataji's account-keeping. In a few minutes S. also entered. Papa, looking at S. said, "Ramdas is explaining to him how Mataji is dealing with her cash and accounts."

Then (*addressing Ramachandra Rao*) Papa continued: "You must see her sitting with her account books, her glasses on, like a wise accountant. Keshav is her assistant. She thinks he can purchase things, keep the accounts and strike the balance all right. She has yet fifteen days' accounts to write to bring her cash-book up-to-date. But if she sits with Keshav for two hours, she will finish all her entries!"

Ramachandra Rao : "Is she able to do the balancing all right?"

S : "Regarding balancing, the accounts must take care of themselves."

Papa : "She enters there whatever entries she can get hold of. Some may be left out; she does not know. She has got her own peculiar ways of keeping accounts. So simple and plain. What an amount of trouble these auditors and accountants take to keep their accounts in proper form! Theirs is a complicated system. They must come to Mataji to learn the simplest system, where there is no botheration of balancing at all."

S : "Mataji does not give any value to cheques. She wants only ready cash."

Papa : "If Ramdas says he has received a cheque for Rs. 100, she says, 'Phoo!' Because, for cashing she will have to wait till the bank opens next day or so. She wants ready money then and there, and only rupees, no smaller coins. If Money Order comes, say for fifteen rupees and twelve annas, she takes fifteen rupees and passes on the balance of twelve annas to Ramdas. He keeps the changes in a bag and uses the same for sundry expenses. Whenever she wants a rupee or more, if she has nothing left, she opens this bag and takes what she wants. Do you know where her treasury is? She rolls up currency notes and twists them round her saree's edge, about her waist. Whenever anybody asks for money, she takes it out from her saree, just like a juggler. Her account-keeping is, indeed, wonderful. Ramdas sometimes looks at her, when she is sitting with her spectacles on, to write the accounts. It is an enjoyable sight. But when Ramdas laughs at her, she looks at Ramdas with not a very pleasant eye. That makes Ramdas run away from there. When Ramdas tries to teach her the usual ways of account-keeping, she gets angry

and says, 'Papa, if you are so particular you had better take up yourself the cash and accounts, or ask somebody else to do it for you. When I do the work I must have my own way and you should not interfere or be critical.' Ramdas would simply reply, 'No, no. Ramdas is not going to do anything of the sort.' That is our Mataji."

S : "She does keep proper accounts in regard to the construction work, as that is important."

Papa : "That at least is something."

And Papa left the room, laughing.

166. 10 p.m. Papa was about to go to sleep in his room. He then
Control of remembered Shivashanker, who used to sit in the room daily for a
Mind not few minutes before Papa went to bed. That day he was not there.
Easy

Papa : "Where is our Rajasthan friend today?"

Gopal : "He is sitting outside on the seat."

Papa : "Oh, that is a fine place for him."

Mataji : "Why does he sit outside today?"

Papa : "What has he to do sitting here? When we are all talking and laughing, he does not understand anything at all. It is better he sits there quietly and does dhyana."

Gopal : "He tells me that he is able to control the mind better."

Papa : "Yes, he said this to Ramdas too. He has got dispassion. To control the mind is not an easy affair. Years of steady sadhana are required. One or two months' sadhana won't do. Even after doing sadhana for thirty years or more, many still complain they cannot control the mind. The highest degree of dispassion is necessary. Ordinary dispassion won't do. Then only one can steadily progress towards complete control of the mind."

XIX

Anandashram, September 17, 1953

167. 8-15 a.m. Papa and M. R. Ramaswami were sitting in Papa's room cracking jokes. They were having with them the book *My Experiments in Gandhiji's Days with Gandhi*. Papa was referring to some events in Gandhiji's life regarding his experiments in brahmacharya. Papa finally **Brahmacharya** remarked: "How many devotees practise brahmacharya? They write to Ramdas that they are practising brahmacharya, living at home with wife and children. After some time, suddenly Ramdas gets a letter to say that the wife has given birth to a boy or a girl. What do you say to this? So Gandhiji's experiment is not an ordinary one. It is very risky."

M. R. Ramaswami : "Publishing the correspondence (with Sevakram) relating to this experiment will open the eyes of many who do not understand Gandhiji."

Papa : "Gandhiji's coming out of it unscathed makes the experiment more glorious. To sleep with a grown-up girl in the same bed for nights together, without any thought of sex arising in the mind of either, is a wonderful achievement."

Looking at S., ready to take down the replies, Papa took out the pending letters and was about to start dictation. S. reminded him of an article to be dictated for the *Sunday Times*.

Papa : "Ramdas will dictate it tomorrow. His throat is not well today. He has slight headache also."

S : "Then why should Papa answer the letters today unless they are very urgent?"

Papa : "There is nothing urgent."

Papa then put the letters back in the case and started from the room with his walking-stick, S. following. They went down and saw how the work of the septic tank was progressing. From there they went to the kitchen. Mataji was there, with some other women, cutting vegetables. Mataji enquired how Papa's throat was. "It

is as bad as yesterday", said Papa. Each one there suggested a remedy for the throat. But Papa did not want to try any and said, "Ramdas will have the milk with turmeric added, as yesterday. Nothing else." They also enquired what vegetables should be prepared for him. He gave some suggestions. Then he said, "Now Ramdas has finished his job. Let us go and see Ramachandra Rao."

Coming out of the dining-hall, looking at the cloudy sky, S. said, "Papa, clouds are gathering. It might rain today."

Papa: "If they pour down some water it is all right. Otherwise there is no fun in their gathering, it will only make the day warmer."

A very old worker of the ashram, named Kanna, was splitting firewood. Papa went very near him. It was Papa's custom to joke always with the old man.

Papa: "Kanna, look at the clouds. Will it rain today, or will the clouds scatter away?"

Kanna: "Yesterday there was a chance of some rain, but today the clouds are not very encouraging."

Papa: "Kanna, you must do this. Use your mantra to get the rain. Indra must be pleased. While you go on splitting firewood, go on repeating the mantra also to get us rain. Will you do it?"

Kanna: "Ah"—(*as if in agreement*).

Papa laughed at Kanna's simplicity and left him to carry on with his work.

Dr. Kuppuswami was examining C. Ramachandra Rao when Papa entered the room. Ramachandra Rao made pranams to Papa, who sat on the chair near Ramachandra Rao's cot.

Dr. Kuppuswami: "He has not been getting proper sleep. I gave him a pill. Still he was awake from two o'clock."

Ramachandra Rao: "From two to five I was awake."

Papa: "Ah, the best remedy is to repeat Ramnam."

Ramachandra Rao: "Neither can I sleep nor repeat Ramnam."

Papa: "If you start repeating Ramnam you will get sleep."

Ramachandra Rao laughed.

Dr. Kuppuswami : "He must have complete mental and physical rest."

Ramachandra Rao : "How to have mental rest, tell me."

Papa : "Prescribe the sadhana for it."

Dr. Kuppuswami : "You should not tax your brain nor entertain worrying thoughts."

Ramachandra Rao : "Light reading will be all right, I hope."

Dr. Kuppuswami : "Light reading is all right."

Papa : "What do you mean by light reading? Does reading of *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master* (which Ramachandra Rao was then reading) come under the category of light reading or otherwise?"

After a few minutes' talk on several topics, Papa returned to his room.

168. 5-30 p.m. Papa was again in Ramachandra Rao's room. S. went
He Cures there with a bottle of homeopathic medicine to treat Papa for bad
Himself throat.

S : "How does Papa feel about the throat? Is it any better?"

Papa : "Yes, it is slightly better. There is pain while swallowing the saliva, but not while talking. It was worse this morning."

S : "So Gopal's medicine has done the trick."

Papa : "Ramdas took the turmeric milk, applied a paste externally and also took the homeo medicine sent by Gopal."

Ramachandra Rao : "Let us give credit to all the three."

Papa : "Very impartial. You have left God out of the picture!"

S : "God in the form of turmeric milk, paste and homeo medicine has helped the cure. Is it not so, Papa? Then God is not left out at all."

Papa (*laughing*) : "That is the vedantic view. So God will not be angry, because we have never left Him out. He has cured Himself in the form of medicine, milk and turmeric."

The weather was so cloudy that it appeared as if it would rain.

Papa (*looking out*) : "It will be nice if it rains. (*After a pause*) No. Let us not ask for anything. Let God do as He wills. If we get rain, the crops in the Vidyalaya compound fields will rot and if we do not get rain the crops in the wet fields will all die. So let Him do as He thinks best. If it rains it must be slow drizzling for two or three hours. That will not cause damage, but at the same time it will help the other fields."

S : "Then if we are asking God for rain, we must specify the conditions."

Papa : "We have to say that He might give rain over the wet fields and not over the Vidyalaya compound fields. That will be nice." (*Laughter*).

The post was brought and Papa got busy reading the letters.

September 18, 1953

169. 8 a.m. Papa was sitting in the bhajan-hall, reading the book *My Lives of Mahatmas must be presented in toto.* *Days with Gandhi.* Mataji was writing Ramnam sitting in front of him. Papa was also telling her some important incidents from Gandhiji's life. S. entered the hall and stood by the side of Papa. Later, Mataji and S. went to the kitchen for breakfast. S. sat opposite to Mataji.

Mataji : "When we read about mahatmas first, we are given a picture of their lofty ideals and in general everything of their bright side. But gradually later on, through some other books or through authentic but unpublished reports, many things relating to the other side, which their closest followers wanted to hide, come out. Hiding such things is not possible. They all come out some day or other. And that will cause great disturbance in the minds of their staunch followers, because they would never have expected such things of those whom they revered. To avoid this, a clear picture ought to be given from the very beginning without any reservation. Then the readers will clearly understand how things are and there will be no room for later disappointment. In Gandhiji's case, do you know what was happening? He started writing about himself when he was on the path. While on the path, one gets varied experiences which go on changing as one progresses."

S : "Gandhiji had made some statements, and years later he had changed his opinion. When asked why he did so, he replied that when he made the first statement he found that, that was the right thing, as when he made the later statement."

Mataji : "It is because the statements were made while on the path. He might admit that his later experience proved his earlier ones wrong. On this point, what an amount of quarrel I had with Papa ! There were terrible quarrels."

S : "On what point?"

Mataji : "Papa used to say that people who have attained such and such a state (say God-realisation) will not do certain things. I questioned why we should say that they would not do certain things. When they have gone above dharma and adharma, why should they be limited to do only certain things? Papa never agreed, in those days, with my views. But now he says that I am right, and when he writes he is expressing my views. By not fully explaining things, we are doing great injustice to admirers and followers. Of course, mahatmas are not affected in any way. They have gone beyond this stage. But a sadhaka has to discriminate and avoid persons and things likely to hamper his progress."

170. After breakfast, S. hurried up to Papa's room. Papa was engrossed in talk with M. R. Ramaswami, who was sitting by his side. S. sat in front of Papa quietly. Their conversation was uninterrupted. S. heard the following :
Papa's Princely Life, the Why and Wherefore

Papa : "The present life of Ramdas is a fulfilment of his sadhana life."

M. R. Ramaswami : "What do you mean by fulfilment? Is it the external life that you refer to?"

Papa : "No. He is now enjoying without any sadhana or effort that very thing which was attained by sadhana and strict discipline and later on maintained by sadhana. Now he is absolutely free from all sadhanas, but at the same time he enjoys the supreme bliss."

Ramaswami : "Is Papa referring to the external life?"

Papa : "No, the external life makes no difference in the internal state. The inner joy is not conditioned by the external comforts or their lack."

Ramaswami : "Papa's present life, as far as the externals are concerned, has no comparison with a common man's life. It is definitely an aristocrat's life. Does Papa think that it is in the best interests of the devotees?"

Papa : "Definitely yes. Ramdas is setting an example to the world that one can live in the world, apparently involved in everything, but absolutely detached. Ramdas now does not crave for luxurious things but he accepts whatever is given to him."

Ramaswami : "Is Papa accepting everything in the interests of all?"

Papa : "You see, when Ramdas was a sadhaka he was feeling that he was not leading the real life. Then he was rejecting anything that would stand in the way of his meditation. He would not stay in houses. He would sleep only on rough ground. But very few people ran after him then. Now he is not even wearing ochre clothes. He lives just like an ordinary man. Still why do people crowd round him in thousands? As Ramdas told you, he had known that the life of complete external renunciation was not everything. Then it was that he happened to meet Sri Siddharudha Swamiji. Ramdas found that he was receiving presents of silk and other costly garments and would wear them. He permitted a gold crown adorn his head and allowed worship by all. In the early days he was a very great tyagi. Seeing his later life, people criticised him. But, though in the midst of luxury, Ramdas noticed, he was really living on a different plane. Another was Maharshi (Ramana). He was an out and out tyagi—sitting in a small hut with only a loin-cloth on."

Ramaswami : "But in his last days his ashram also had grown very big."

Papa : "Same thing has happened here. We never wanted an ashram to come up. We wanted a small place to live in and take the simplest food. In the early days of the ashram we were living on mere kanji water, that too prepared and served in earthen pots. For sleeping there was one room and the open hall. It was the simplest life. When visitors came here, once it rained so heavily that the water dashed from all sides on the hall; everyone was drenched and wanted to take shelter in a corner. But there was no corner anywhere. There was only a room. All rushed inside. How many could be accommodated? So, as and when we found it necessary, we had more buildings built. Visitors used to come here with their children. They used to shout in the morning for milk. Milk was not available here. It had to come from Kanhangad and it reached here only by 9 o'clock. We thought of having a cow. Now we have a big goshala. It is all for the convenience of the visitors only.

"As far as Ramdas was concerned, he was living the simplest life in the ashram, sitting and sleeping on the floor. But he took ill in 1938 and after that some friends suggested that Ramdas should have a chair. A cot also came. Then Mataji, thinking that this body had suffered a lot and therefore should now be properly looked after, got a quilt made. Next came the mosquito trouble, and the mosquito net. Then special food. So, one after another, comforts increased. Now we have this room with the latest type of bathroom and water-closet.

"But Ramdas is prepared to live anywhere in any condition. When we went to Sholapur (S. knows. He was with us.) at a place called Angar we had to stay in a small house, no better than a hut, which was all damp. There was no furniture except an old cot. Ramdas got fever there. His body cannot stand such hard

conditions now. In other places also there were only small houses with the barest conveniences. Ramdas was quite happy there too. Of course he lives more with rich people in big houses now, while on tour. If anybody were to ask, Ramdas has got his answer for that also.

"After Mataji came in contact with Ramdas, she had changed his life entirely. Otherwise, this ashram would not have come up. He would have been sleeping on the floor anywhere and eating anything that was offered. Mataji's care has made his life what it is. Ramdas tells her often : 'In what a condition Ramdas was and in what have you put him now ?' She replies, 'Your body has suffered enough. Why should you not have all comforts now ? Show the world how to lead a detached life in it'."

Ramaswami : "If, by any chance, the whole ashram is reduced to the old state of only a single room, how would Papa feel about it ?"

Papa : "Oh ! Ramdas would run to the maidan and dance in ecstasy. You know what he did when the weaving shed caught fire. He was simply dancing with joy. The construction work of the present ashram was going on. A temporary shed was built to store timber. Thousands of rupees worth of timber was stacked in it. Ramdas was then staying at T. B. S. Rao's house. From there he saw a big fire on the hill where the new ashram was being built. He called all in the house, showed them the beautiful scene and said, 'See how our timber shed is burning. Now, only the leaf mats are on fire. In a few minutes the timber will catch fire and it will be a more enjoyable scene.' But the fire was not in the shed. It was the dry grass burning on the hill behind the shed, though it looked as if the shed was on fire.

"So Ramdas will dance with joy even if everything in the ashram is reduced to ashes. But Mataji might feel. She gets attached to things that are done here. She does not want to start anything new but whatever has already been started, she says, must be looked after properly and the best use derived from it. Finally she will reconcile herself thus : 'Papa says that everything happens for the best. So this also must be for the best' and will give up worry . . . Now Ramdas must attend to some letters."

Ramaswami got up and left the room.

Papa (to S.) : "We have spent all the time in talking. Ramdas has to go down. He has to postpone dictating the article for the *Sunday Times*. The letters, of course, can wait. You may write a letter on behalf of Ramdas to the *Sunday Times* informing them that Ramdas will be sending an article within the next four or five days."

An hour later, Papa was with Ramachandra Rao in his room. He enquired about his health and sat on the chair.

Papa : "All this morning the talk was why Ramdas is leading a princely life."

He explained to him in brief the talk with M. R. Ramaswami, and said, ' So Ramdas's life is like that of a prince now."

Ramachandra Rao : "Who knows? It may be still better in course of time. But people do ask me why Papa should spend so much money on so-called luxuries, and travel in planes. They even ask why Papa should show more love and get so much attached to Ramkishor."

Papa : "You know how Ramdas feels? He is now a million times happier within than during his days of sannyas. (*Saying this he looked at Ramachandra Rao's eyes steadily for a few seconds.*) One million times happier! Can anybody imagine it? They see only Ramdas moving about here and there taking interest in things as anybody else and living with people as others do. How detached he is, nobody knows."

S : "What others say is natural. Nobody can understand Papa's inner state of joy. It is for Papa to experience. Others look on and understand only the external life and its attachments. That is why, to understand Papa is very hard. Papa's life and experience as narrated in *In Quest of God* are different from those narrated in *In The Vision of God*. After that it has changed considerably. So Papa must write a third book about his present state, that is, the fulfilment."

It was past ten and time for Papa's shave and bath. Papa got up and left with S. for his room.

171. 9-30 p.m. It was time for Papa to go to bed. Gopal was preparing the bed in Papa's room. Lakshmi Narasimhiah was standing near Mataji Papa. Suddenly a person clad in trousers and a bushcoat came like kind even to a flash and fell at Papa's feet, in dandawat namaskar. He was lying a Detractor flat on the ground with his head at Papa's feet, for a couple of minutes. Nobody in the room could recognise the person. He got up and again made namaskar. When he got up they all knew that he was a friend from Bangalore, named Srinivasa Iyengar. When he stood up after the second namaskar, Papa, looking at his face direct with his piercing look, asked him, "Where are you coming from?"

Iyengar : "I am coming from Bangalore."

Papa : "What are you doing there?"

Iyengar : "Nothing."

Papa : "What have you come here for?"

Iyengar : "I have come with a purpose, a definite purpose. I have come to stay here permanently doing sadhana."

Papa : "Certainly not. Sadhana you have to do at home. This is not the place for you. All right, Ramdas will talk to you later. Now go and have something to eat."

He was then taken by Ramachandra to the kitchen. In a few minutes Mataji came in.

Papa (to Mataji) : "Did you see him, who came from Bangalore?"

Mataji : "Yes, he has gone for meal."

Papa : "Do you know what he has come for? He says he wants to stay here doing sadhana. Do you know who this man is? He is the one who wrote the anonymous letter about Swami C."

Mataji (to Gopal) : "Has he brought any bed or clothing with him?"

Gopal : "No, he has come only with what he is wearing!"

Mataji : "Then, don't forget to bring tomorrow two dhotis for him, and two more for Lakshmi Narasimhiah who could not find his clothes after he gave them for washing."

Papa : "Gopal, bring only one for this man. He puts on trousers, English fashion. Don't know if he will wear dhoti. So, give him first one, and if he uses that, he can be given another."

Mataji : "When he comes back from kitchen, take him to H. V. Rao's house and give him also a pillow and a bedsheet."

XX

Anandashram, September 19, 1953

172. 7 a.m. Papa was sitting near the radio in the bhajan-hall.
A Devotee's Narottamdas of Bombay, who had come the previous day, was sitting
Criticism in front. Bangalore Iyengar friend was sitting by his side. When
 S. went there, it looked as if some talk was going on between Papa
and that Iyengar friend. Papa was saying: "Ramdas cannot have you here in the
ashram. You may go home and do sadhana."

Iyengar: "What is the alternative that you suggest to me?"

Papa: "You may go anywhere you like. We have nothing to do with people
of your type and habits. We cannot permit you to stay here, and against our will you
cannot stay even for a minute here."

After some time, Papa was standing in his room waiting to go for his bath.
Iyengar again came and prostrated before Papa.

Papa: "What is this? How many times do you prostrate? Too many
prostrations are no good. Especially for you, it won't be good. You will be a
nuisance here if you go on prostrating every five minutes. You may prostrate after
bhajan. That will do."

8-30 a.m. Narottamdas came, and sat before Papa with a copy of *Darshan* a
Gujarati magazine, as Papa wanted him to read out to him a few articles from it.
Narottamdas started reading. He completed two articles reading paragraphs here
and there, as that was all what Papa wanted to know. Then he came to another
article written by Maganlal L. Raichura, one of the oldest devotees of Papa in
Saurashtra. It began in this strain:

'Many people go to saints and worship them in many ways. The rich people,
with whom the saints prefer to stay, serve them as they can, but they should also
give a chance to the poor devotees to serve them. When we go to see saints, we
spend a lot of money on garlands and fruits and also on photographs and cinema
films. If all these sums were given to the poor suffering people, would it not be
better service of the Lord in that form, so on and so forth.'

Papa : "Ramdas can understand how and where he hits. Now he has some urgent correspondence to attend to."

David Haggot (*the Englishman*) : "May I also come in and join the company?"

Papa : "No. The company is being dissolved. Ramdas is going to attend to some urgent correspondence."

Then Papa and S. were left alone to attend to their work.

173. Close on 1 p.m. Mataji was having lunch in the dining-hall.
Mataji's Seated opposite to her were M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram, S. and
answer others. When Mataji was about to rise S. asked, "Mataji, did Papa
tell you about Maganlal and his article in the *Darshan*?"

Mataji : "Yes, Papa explained it during his bath. It had been working in my mind even before I sat for lunch. But I didn't like to talk about it. Now you have broached the topic. (*pause for a few seconds*) He has written what a saint is said to have remarked once. But they cannot be accepted as always true. Let us look at the advantages :

(i) The devotees bring a lot of garlands for the saints. They purchase them from poor people who make their living by selling garlands. Is it not a service to them also ?

(ii) Fruits are also bought in plenty from poor people who sell them. The money goes only to the poor.

(iii) As for photographs and cine film. Let us take the case of Papa. In future, what joy it will give to one who has not seen Papa, to see his photo ! How happy we all will be to see him in the cine film moving about or doing various things ! Even now when people see the films of saints like Jnaneshwar, Tukaram and others, many shed tears—they are so much moved. Why talk about others ? I myself shed tears profusely. So, for people who see Papa's picture, especially after some years, it will be a source of great inspiration.

"So we cannot ignore this aspect. By writing that way, our Maganlal is doing a great injustice to all devotees. Once published, it cannot be taken back, and once the minds of devotees are disturbed, they cannot be pacified. Even if we lose lakhs of rupees or sovereigns they can be replaced ; but not this type of loss.

"Another fact is, it would have been well if the thousands spent on ashrams be utilised for building houses for the poor people who have no suitable houses to live in. They are residing, as we have seen, in hovels made of old broken tin sheets,

or low thatched huts with leaf-mat enclosures. A neat, decent hut would not cost more than Rs. 500 each.

“Why should I find fault with others? See what we have been doing. We cannot say that we are models for others. With the money we were getting, we ought to have constructed houses for the poor people here and wherever we went. Then the encumbrance of the ashram would not have come into being. Now, those who have been giving are tired of giving, and we are tired of receiving, and those who have been making use of that money are also tired of that. Everybody is tired.

“Papa is really unmindful of all these things. Not that he does not know and only I know, but he does not mind what is happening. You can see Papa is unmindful of many things but I am not. I want everything done properly at the proper place and time. Even in wearing clothes, Papa was careless and I was very particular. He used to wear only one cloth over his body. Perspiration and coarseness of the khaddar cloth bruised his tender skin. You know how tender Papa’s skin is. It is like that of a child. When I asked him to have two pieces of thin cloth, he refused. Then I told him, ‘Why should you not have thin cloth? Why should you say you will do this or you will not do that? You have been wearing thick cloth all these years; why not change now? What is the harm? And why do you say you will wear only khaddar? Why not foreign cloth also? Why should you put yourself under limitations? Papa never agreed in those days. Later on he somehow took to using thinner cloth.

“We have been sitting very long. Our hands are all dried up. Let us go and wash our hands.”

All got up.

Mataji (*continued*) : “It must be understood that everybody has his own way of worship. It is like this. Suppose there are a few children in a house. Mother sees to the dressing, feeding and so on of these children. But is she feeding them all with the same food and giving them the same dress? Let alone the fact that even one type of food or dress given to one child one day may not agree with the same child another day. We were six children in our house. Mother was very sickly. The eldest, Datta (you know him), would go to her and say, ‘I want this curry to be prepared immediately. Otherwise I won’t eat.’ Mother, though weak, would prepare the needed curry for her son. When I came from Bombay and saw these things, I used to take him to task. Instead of serving mother, why should he give her so much trouble? So they did not like me and never wished that I should be with them. In the same way, Papa is looking after us all, his children, and allowing us to progress in whatever line that suits us, without making any drastic or forcible changes. Even when children are playing, if the mother asks them to play as she likes, they won’t be happy. Mother has to allow the children to play their own games, at the same time watching that they do not hurt themselves.

"Papa is making each one of us follow his or her own way of worship and devotion. But we are not yet fortunate enough to make the best use of his teachings.

"Why talk about people in distant places? We see Ramkishor being loved by Papa very much, and we feel the boy is very lucky. You know how his mother feels about it. She says, Papa is spoiling him, not directing him properly, as he does in the case of other children. Look at the way things happen very near us!"

S: "So, finally we stop at that." (*all laugh*).

Mataji: "As the saying in Konkani goes, 'You allow a pumpkin to rot at your own feet, but find fault with one under whose feet a mustard grain rots'."

Mataji then went inside the kitchen to attend to some work, and others left for their rooms.

September 21, 1953

174. 10 a.m. Papa's room.

Life in

Everything

S (*to Papa*): "Papa had no oil massage for many days now. Shall we start it today?"

Papa: "Ramdas feels we can start it today. You may arrange for it."

Then Papa was called to the garden where the carpenter and Keshav were waiting for some suggestion from him regarding the construction of some seats in the garden. Papa went there and in a few minutes returned to his room. Immediately he called out to Keshav through the window and said, "That tree on the other side should be cut now. It has no place near the garden." After a few minutes, turning to S. Papa said, "Ramdas told him to cut that tree. Will he cut the good Parijata tree instead of that jungle tree?"

Then Papa called Keshav again and explained to him clearly the particular tree he had to cut. He then sat on his cot, ready for the massage.

Papa: "Ramdas has passed death sentence on that poor tree. It must have already known about it, poor thing! They must have a subtle sense to understand things. Ramdas feels sorry for it. In olden days it was impossible for Ramdas to give even the slightest injury to any plant. Even now he cannot see anybody unnecessarily destroying plants.

"Let alone plants, he could not even cut a stone in those days. When they were struck or cut, Ramdas used to feel the pain of the stroke or cut on his body."

S : "Even the so-called inanimate things?"

Papa : "Yes. Ramdas finds there is nothing inanimate. There is life in everything."

S : "If such intense feeling is there, how can one pull on in the world? One will not be able to do anything."

Papa : "That is a necessary stage, but one has to go beyond it.

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

—take shelter there. There is no other alternative."

S : "God has made such a provision."

Papa : "Yes, many do horrible things and quote this sloka. Mere quoting and real living are different."

175. 10 p.m. There was only a dim light in Papa's room. Papa was **Mischievous** lying on the cot. Subbaram was fanning. Gopal, Ramachandra, and **Sri Krishna** Shivashanker were near the cot. Ramkishor was sleeping a few yards away. Parvatibai was fanning Ramkishor. Papa was lying on his right side, and S. and Motiben were massaging him, one on each side. When he turned to his left he felt his stomach heavy. Then he laughed and said, "Why has Ram created this stomach? It would have been so nice to go on without the stomach."

S : "What does Ram say?"

Papa : "He is quiet like a tomb, or it would be better to say, like a stuffed bird."

Papa asked Parvatibai : "Why has God created this stomach?"

Parvatibai : "As if you don't know."

S : "Papa, let her ask her Krishna and get a reply."

Papa (to Parvatibai) : "S. says that you should ask your Krishna and tell us."

Parvatibai (laughing) : "Stomach is there so that we may work. Without the stomach we shall not have to work for anything."

Papa : "Why ? We must work to have a good building to live in, fine motor cars to go about and so on. You ask your Krishna. Let us hear what He says."

Parvatibai : "How can He answer what you cannot ? And He is afraid to talk when you are here. Because you put so many cross questions to Him."

Papa : "Why should He be afraid ? Is Ramdas a ferocious creature ?"

Parvatibai : "All other times He is talking to me and doing a lot of mischief also. When I go to the kitchen to pick stones from rice, He is there to disturb me."

Papa : "Lock Him up somewhere in a room and leave something there for Him to eat. What is the tiffin for tomorrow ?"

Motiben : "Rice-rulam."

Papa : "Put some of the rice-rulam in His mouth and then lock Him up."

Parvatibai : "Even when I get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, there He is ready to do a lot of mischief."

Papa : "Does He not sleep ?"

Parvatibai : "He says, if He sleeps, the whole universe will sleep."

Papa : "Ram is also getting mischievous nowadays. He does not give us rain in time. He is causing the paddy crop to go dry. He was not like that before. Has He become bad by contact with your Krishna ? Is it sanga-dosha ?"

Parvatibai : "May be ; Krishna is so mischievous."

Just then Mataji came in and saw Papa and all others laughing. She asked what the matter was. Papa replied that they were talking about Krishna's doings. Mataji also laughed.

Mataji : "Now, what are the vegetables to be cooked for you tomorrow ?"

Papa : "We have received the vegetable parcel from Bangalore. Have we not ?"

Mataji : "Was it not shown to Papa ?"

Papa : "Yes. There are lots of vegetables now."

He then gave some suggestions for the next day's preparations.

Papa : "Now Ramdas must go to sleep. It is past ten."

Then all others departed one by one, leaving Papa, Mataji, Motiben and Ramkishor in the room.

XXI

Anandashram, September 22, 1953

176. Harvesting started in the morning. Papa and Mataji together went
Make no to the S. K. V. fields. Mataji requested Papa to harvest the first
Plans. sheaf. Papa took the sickle and cut a few ears of paddy and handed
Surrender them over to Keshav, who in turn gave them to Mataji to bless.
to God

4-30 p.m. Papa was closing the doors from outside his room and locking them. Coming out, he saw S. and said, "Ramdas is going out."

S : "Whereto, Papa?"

Papa : "He must go and see Ramachandra Rao."

S : "Not going to the fields?"

Papa : "He would like to, but not now."

Coming out from the ashram, he saw David Haggot coming towards the ashram.

Haggot : "Are you going out?"

Papa : "Only to see this friend here. Where had you been?"

Haggot : "May I also come? I must show him how I wear my dhoti."

Papa : "By all means."

Just then Mataji came from the kitchen.

Papa (*to Mataji*) : "Where are you going?"

Mataji : "To the fields."

Haggot : "I had been to the fields. I wanted to join those harvesting the crops. But they were all women. So I did not think it proper to join them."

Mataji went to the fields, and Papa, Haggot and S. to Ramachandra Rao's room. Narottamdas also joined the party.

Papa entered the room and sat on a chair, when Ramachandra Rao prostrated before him. Papa asked him, "Did you notice our friend?"

Now Haggot joined his hands to pay his respects to Ramachandra Rao, saying, "I have been wearing this dhoti only to show you."

Ramachandra Rao : "Yes. You wear it nicely. This is Kanarese fashion. Where did you learn to wear it?"

Haggot : "At Hassan."

Papa asked all to sit, and they did.

Haggot : "Swamiji, to attain to a state of complete surrender, is it really necessary that one should give up making all plans?"

Papa : "Yes. Absolutely no plans whatsoever. Whatever He brings about, you accept."

Haggot : "Say, for businessmen ; they have to make some plan for their trade. Can they not do it?"

Papa : "Business or no business. There is no compromise here. If you want to attain to Truth, you must give up making plans."

177. Haggot : "But Gandhiji was making plans. He planned Swarajya.
Gandhiji's Did he not ?"
End

Papa : "That was why he had a lot of worry too. There was always something or other to worry him. Ramdas still remembers what he is said to have remarked while he was detained in Yervada jail. At that time there were riots in many places, resulting in bloodshed. Daily news was extremely painful for Gandhiji to hear. A friend or co-worker of Gandhiji went and asked him when he would be back to take up the leadership which they missed so badly. Gandhiji replied that he was doing better work for the world by his silent prayers from within the jail, and that he did not want to enter into meddlesome activities. He felt that by his doing something he was meddling with God's will, trying to assert his own. The moment we allow God's will to work, then everything will be all right. No friction anywhere. Gandhiji was unhappy during his last days because of the partition, the resultant refugees' problem and communal disturbances. In fact he had wished for an early death, by being shot,

and he got it. Some people ask why God did not prevent that tragedy, when Gandhiji was in the hands of God. Ramdas finds that God did not prevent it because Gandhiji himself had wished it and God fulfilled his wish."

September 23, 1953

178. 9 a.m. Papa, during his morning round, visited the kitchen, and **What after all** also went to see Ramachandra Rao. Coming out from the latter's **the loss of a** room he told S.: "Ramdas feels he must today go to Chandri's **Watch ?** house. For many days he has not been there. The Gujarati friend staying there is going away, so also the Trichur friends. Swami Aghorananda is also going away next Sunday. Let us go and see them."

Before Papa entered the house, Swami Aghorananda was seen coming out.

Papa : "We are coming to your house."

Swami Aghorananda now returned with Papa to the house. The Gujarati friend (Amin) and another devotee from Trivandrum were sitting in the veranda. As soon as Papa reached the veranda, both of them got up and paid their respects to Papa.

Papa (*addressing Amin*) : "You are running away from us. You wanted to stay for two months, but you have decided to go away so soon. Do you not like us?"

Amin laughed and kept quiet.

Papa : "Why do you leave us alone and run away ? Let us go in."

They entered the room where Amin was staying.

Swami Aghorananda : "Swamiji, this friend went to Mangalore yesterday, and he took the opportunity to see the Panchapandava cave also."

Papa (*to Amin*) : "Who took you there ?"

Amin : "Those friends who came here took me there. Swamiji, it is a horrible cave. How did you stay there ?"

Swami Aghorananda : "Amin saw the cave and was happy, but he was sorry he lost his pocket watch."

Papa (*to Amin*) : "Have you lost your watch ?"

Amin : "Yes, perhaps it slipped through my shirt when I tried to put it in my pocket."

Papa : "How old are you ?"

Amin : "Sixty-three years."

Papa : "Say, you may live up to 100 years. During this period, you look after the body, nourish it, love it, feed it, clothe it and what not, but finally such a loved body you drop and go. What, after all, is a watch then, when this precious body itself is to be left behind by you ?"

Saying that he wanted to see Chandribai's room also, Papa called Chandribai, who had gone to the kitchen apparently to bring some sweets. Papa, standing before the pictures of saints and gods that Chandribai had kept for worship, said, "Ramdas has come here to see your gods."

He then went straight to the kitchen. Chandribai put into his mouth a small ball of sweet prepared out of cocoanut and jaggery, when Papa remarked : "There is some gain in Ramdas's coming here. Isn't it ?"

Chandribai distributed sweets to all those who were with Papa, before he left.

12-15 p.m. Mataji, Subbaram and S. were in the *Vision* office where Saiba was framing photographs. Subbaram took a photo and showed it to Mother.

Subbaram : "This frame is good but each side has a different colour. However it looks nice from a distance."

S : "Everything looks nice from a distance."

Mataji : "Yes. Everything looks nice from a distance. Study a person by staying near him ; and the effect of water by taking a dip in it. That is why I tell all those who praise me, that they should come and stay near me. Then they will know me well and will stop praising me."

September 26, 1953

179. 11 a.m. The postman came in with a telegram. Papa took it and
Devotees are opened the cover. It was about Ammini's arrival from Salem by
like Mail the next day.
Bhramaras

Papa : "Ammini is coming tomorrow."

Ramachandra Rao : "Who is she, Papa ?"

Papa : "She is Dr. Ramaswami's sister. She is a widow. She lost her daughter recently and, on that account, is immersed in grief. It is better that she comes and

stays here for some time. She might feel peaceful in this atmosphere. Is it certain that she will have peace here?"

Ramachandra Rao : "Yes. Where is any doubt about it, Papa?"

Papa : "So, you testify to it. Now what do you say, Lakshmi Narasimhiah?"

Lakshmi Narasimhiah laughed and kept quiet.

Papa : "Ramdas asks you because you are all bhramaras (large black bees) coming from a distance to drink the honey, and therefore know its sweetness. But we here are all frogs under the lotus plant."

Lakshmi Narasimhiah : "You are honey itself. How can honey know its own sweetness? So we, who come from outside, only can know the sweetness."

180. 9-30 p.m. Papa was lying down. Subbaram and Ramachandra
Transcend were fanning him. Shivashanker was sitting on one side. Shivashanker
Gunās to see would be quite unconcerned about all the talks going on, but
the Universe suddenly, like a shot, would bring out a question, making all those
as God present burst into laughter. He would always talk about 'Bhagawan-
 Maya.' That day, when all were quiet, Shivashanker suddenly
quoted a verse from a Hindi song, the meaning of which was, "Having forgotten
ourselves we have become miserable." Papa repeated the same verse twice in Hindi,
and laughed. All laughed, including Shivashanker.

Papa : "Remove your forgetfulness. Then you will be all right."

Shivashanker : "Mahatmas must do it for us."

Papa : "Mahatmas have told you this verse, and it is up to you to do the rest.
What more can mahatmas do?"

Shivashanker : "Tulsidasji had enabled many to get darshan."

Papa : "Darshan of what? Only saguna-sakshatkar. That comes and vanishes.
When you get darshan you are happy and at other times you suffer intensely from
viraha. That type of darshan won't do. Saguna darshan, one can get when he is in
satva. It is only darshan of one's Ishta in a bright form, when the mind is
concentrated upon that form. But the moment the mind is subdued by rajas, the
Ishta disappears."

Shivashanker : "By the highest type of saguna darshan, can we not see the
whole universe as His form?"

Papa: "No. For that darshan one has to go beyond all gunas; must be trigunatita, dvandvatita. While having saguna darshan, mind's existence is still there. It must go. For this higher darshan, jnana is the background. That is why it is said one must have jnana-bhakti or parabhakti. By Ramnam alone one can get this higher darshan. Ramnam is the surest means of destroying all vasanas and purifying the mind to qualify itself for darshan. You know Kabir has sung many of his songs, extolling Ramnam."

Subbaram: "In Kabir's songs the end is always 'Listen, O Sadhu!' Why is it so?"

Papa: "Because there are any number of sadhus of different types and creeds. They generally do not have faith in Ramnam, but go on doing various other sadhanas. To them Kabir says, 'Sing Ramnam', and extols its glory."

181. Papa got up and sat on the cot. Mataji came near him from the Ramnam, the bhajan-hall, where she was resting.
Nectarine pill

Papa (to Mataji): "Ramnam is the nectarine pill. But who knows about it? Leaving this nectar behind, many go after siddhis which only help them to strengthen their ego. He who was once saying 'I am a householder', after becoming a sadhu, says 'I am a sannyasi'. In both cases the 'I' is there. One who takes to Ramnam becomes so humble, sweet and blissful from the very beginning of his sadhana. But none wants it. They do some concentration and meditation, get the mind one-pointed to some extent; then some siddhis come and they go astray from the path. They run after siddhis and are lost. There is no such danger in regard to Ramnam."

Papa was speaking this with so much joy that it looked as if he would be dancing about soon.

Continuing, he said, "Walking, Ramnam; sitting, Ramnam; eating, Ramnam; drinking, Ramnam; talking, Ramnam; hearing, Ramnam; seeing, Ramnam; always Ramnam, Ramnam, Ramnam. Let us plunge in the nectarine sea of Ramnam. We shall not die by plunging into that sea. But we will become immortal.

"Now go and sleep."

XXII

Anandashram, September 27, 1953

182. Ammini and her grandchildren arrived at the ashram around
A Mother's 3-45 p.m. Ammini entered the ashram in uncontrollable sorrow,
Grief profuse tears streaming down her face. She prostrated before Papa
 and sat in front of him. She tried to speak a few words but could
hardly speak because of her choked voice. She made her grandchildren also prostrate,
They appeared cheerful. Papa also could not speak a word to her. After a few minutes'
silence, during which Ammini was weeping bitterly, Papa said, "You must control
yourself. Go and see Mataji." Then she got up and, followed by the children, went
to see Mataji.

Now Papa and S. were alone in the ashram.

Papa : "Ammini was weeping terribly. It is well she came here for a stay."

S : "Last time also when she came here she was weeping, was she not?"

Papa : "She was not weeping. It was long after her husband's death. But she was very anxious about her son's welfare, as he was in England at that time. It was during the war, and the Germans were bombing England constantly. Everyday we were getting reports of bombing and consequent destruction in many places. Every time she heard a report about bombing, she used to feel so much agitated that during the whole period of her stay here she was very anxious."

S : "A report of bombing there would mean to her something like bombing her heart."

Papa : "Yes. Why talk about her only? Because of Ammini, whenever Ramdas heard or read reports of bombing in England, he used to feel very anxious himself, though he was assuring Ammini that there was no need to fear and everything would be all right.

"She repeated Ramnam constantly, and went round the aswattha tree every morning. She did that for months together. At last when her son came back she ran home and brought him here. She took him to task for not coming to the ashram straight, before going home. She then presented a silver plate to Ramdas."

183. 5 p.m. Papa was going towards Ramachandra Rao's room. R. Rao
Papa was sitting on his cot with the book *Sri Ramakrishna the Great*
besought *Master* before him. When Papa entered, he got up, prostrated, and
for Grace sat again on the cot. Papa took his seat on a chair.

Papa : "Have you finished reading this book ?"

Ramachandra Rao : "Yes, Papa."

Papa : "You are a voracious reader, no doubt."

Ramachandra Rao : "I have everything except one."

Papa : "What is that ?"

Ramachandra Rao : "In the last chapter here it is said that an ardent devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, named Vaikunthanath, was always praying for Sri Ramakrishna's grace. But Sri Ramakrishna was evading. And finally he could not wait any longer. He fell at Sri Ramakrishna's feet, weeping and poured out his heart and craved for grace. Sri Ramakrishna touched him on the head and asked him to get up. When Vaikunthanath got up, his vision had changed. He saw Sri Ramakrishna everywhere. What a blissful darshan it was !"

Ramachandra Rao then got up from the cot and put his head on Papa's feet, saying, "now it is your duty to pour grace on me and change my vision." He remained in that position for about two minutes. Papa was silent. Then Ramachandra Rao got up and sat on the cot gazing at Papa, his eyes red and tears flowing. Papa also kept on gazing at him.

Ramachandra Rao : "You should not ignore us long. It is horrible — these worldly cares and worries. What more can I do ? You know all that I want. I don't even have to ask. What is that you don't know ? You know what is in my heart."

Papa : "Ramdas knows and knows not."

Ramachandra Rao : "I know Papa knows. Why should Papa say that he knows not ? When Papa says he knows, why should I worry ?"

Papa : "Why should you worry?"

184. Ramachandra Rao : "We worry because you have not yet given
Ramdas's us. It is all right for you. You are above worries. But we are
concern for caught up in them."
devotees

Papa : "Do you think that Ramdas has no worries? He too has worries. Does he not worry about you all? If Ramdas does not worry about you all, will you all come here? If he were to remain unaffected by anything, like a stone, how many will come to him? He worries about your welfare and progress; he is unhappy when you are unhappy. In another aspect, of course, he remains unaffected and changeless."

Ramachandra Rao : "But your worries do not make any impression on you. They disappear like a line drawn on water. But ours are not like that. We are bound."

Papa : "The difference between Ramdas's worry and another man's worry is that when Ramdas worries, he is still conscious that he has another aspect that does not worry or change. All men are not conscious of it."

Ramachandra Rao : "Why don't you make us conscious of that?"

Papa : "Why should you think that Ramdas is not doing it? What else is he doing? He is busy only in making you all progress on the path."

Ramachandra Rao : "But, Papa, I don't know if I will get another opportunity. In this life I have you. If I have to take another life I don't know what will happen. So I must make the best use of my life now."

185. Papa : "Do you think you can escape from Ramdas? Even if you
You cannot were to hide yourself, he will come and pull you out. Ramdas can
escape from escape from you, but you cannot escape from Ramdas. So do not
Ramdas think that Ramdas is not worrying about you all."

At this assurance Ramachandra Rao again put his head on Papa's feet. Papa patted him on the back and after a few seconds Ramachandra Rao got up.

Ramachandra Rao : "Papa, do not keep us long in all these worries. Oh, I had a bad dream last night. It was terrible."

Papa : "Why do you attach any importance to dreams, whether good or bad? You have to go beyond the dream, sleep and waking states."

Ramachandra Rao : "I found myself in a temple. I saw the deity there, decorated, and I was shouting to the pujaris there to show me the way out."

Papa : "You saw a temple! That is not a bad dream."

Ramachandra Rao : "But the scenes outside the temple were horrible, dirty and what not. I could not place my foot anywhere and I wanted to get away. But the pujaris never listened to me though I asked them any number of times."

Papa : "Why were you in a hurry to get out of the temple?"

Ramachandra Rao : "The scenes outside were too much for me to stand there."

186. Papa : "That was all to make you see God in good and bad things
Truth beyond alike. You cannot abhor bad things, for God lives in them too.
Good and Ramdas remembers an incident in Sri Ramakrishna's life. Once he
Bad—Laugh saw somebody, absolutely naked, eating from the remains thrown
and be merry out from houses in the street. Sri Ramakrishna recognised in him a
 great saint. He called one of his disciples and asked him to go after
the sadhu and seek whatever advice he might be gracious enough to give. The
disciple went near him. Seeing the man coming near, the sadhu asked him to get
away, but he did not listen. Both walked a long distance. The sadhu stood near a
gutter and told the disciple who was following him: 'When you see no difference
between this ditch water and the Ganges water, then only you will have realised the
Truth.' So, good and bad are only different aspects of Truth. That means Truth is
beyond both."

Ramachandra Rao : "But the bad things I saw in the temple were horrible."

Papa : "If not in the temple, where could the bad things be?"

All laughed—Ramachandra Rao especially laughed so much that he was
holding his chest with his hand.

Papa : "Any pain in your heart?"

Ramachandra Rao : "No, Papa. You make us laugh and laugh, and you quietly
evade what we ask for."

Papa (*again laughing*) : "What is realisation then? It is not sitting with a
long face. We must laugh and be merry. Ramdas believes only in that. So, keep
laughing. Ramdas must now be going to the kitchen."

From the kitchen, Kunhambu brought a big plate full of bananas presented by
Ammini. It was shown to Papa, who said, "Ramdas has already seen this. Why
should they bring it again? It has become a ritual here to bring everything to
show to Ramdas. You may take it. Has Mataji seen it?" Kunhambu replied, "Yes",
and left.

The paddy harvested from the Sri Krishna Vidyalaya compound had been
thrashed and partly dried. Whatever was ready after winnowing had to be measured
and stored in the granary. Mataji had requested Papa to go there at 5-30 p.m. So
Papa directly went from Ramachandra Rao's room towards the kitchen. Mataji was

waiting there. She took Papa near the granary. One of the workers brought a small quantity of paddy and showed it to Papa. Mataji asked Papa to take a handful and put it in the granary first, before the paddy was stored. Papa did accordingly. The worker then requested Mataji also to do likewise. She did as Papa did, saying at the same time, "Why should I do so, when Papa has done it?" Papa then came out and sat watching the paddy being measured and taken to the granary.

187. 9-45 p.m. It was Papa's bedtime. S. was massaging his back and
Man, a Motiben his legs. A few others were also in the room. Papa appeared
conceited to be deeply thinking of something. He said with a sigh, "Ram's
animal will be done! Ram's will be done!"

S : "What is the matter, Papa?"

Papa : "Man is after all a conceited animal."

S : "Animal?"

Papa : "Yes, a conceited animal. He is proud of his learning, wealth, beauty, name and fame, and position. And if he is a spiritual aspirant he is proud of being one. He always compares his own spiritual progress with that of others near him and feels himself taller, head and shoulders, than any other aspirant. So he ever goes on saying, 'I am learned, I am wealthy, I am wise, I have position, I have more spiritual progress than any other and so on'."

S : "So there is always something to follow this 'I'."

Papa : "Inevitable. After all, what is there for him to be proud of? You saw the Bhagavatar who came this afternoon. He praised Ramdas to the skies, saying, 'Swamiji, you are a great mahatma no doubt. What all things you have done within this short period of twentytwo years! An up-to-date ashram with all facilities! Who else can do it?' Ramdas was surprised at what he was saying and replied, 'What do you mean? Ramdas is after all a particle of dust under His feet. What can he do? Whatever has been done was done by Ram. Ramdas is nothing. Do you think all these things can be done by human effort? Impossible. Ram alone did everything.'"

S : "What did he reply?"

Papa : "He said, 'hoo, hoo,' and kept quiet."

188. A few minutes later, Papa continued : "He narrated to Ramdas a
A bit of his experience when he was at Tellicherry yesterday. He was
Bhagavatar's the guest there of a Brahmin family. Last night, after their meal,
experience the husband and wife, it seems, were talking. Wife : 'Why don't
 you offer tamboola to the Bhagavatar? He is an honourable guest

in our house.' Husband : 'What do you think ? He won't use tamboola or anything of the sort.' This morning, after meal, the Bhagavatar was to leave them. When he started, the wife from inside was asking her husband, 'It seems you are sending the Bhagavatar without anything. Should you not give him some presents ? It does not look nice to send him empty-handed.' Husband : 'You don't know. People like him do not accept anything. They wander from place to place without possessions. I know them very well. If we offer them anything, they may consider it an insult. Do you understand now ?' The Bhagavatar came away. He said only so much about the husband and wife, but never commented on them."

S : "The Bhagavatar was lucky to a great extent in that he was given food the previous night. The husband did not say that he knew such people would take food only once and that during the day, and would consider it an insult if offered food at night."

Papa : "So far he was fortunate. Of course, he would have resorted to hotels later. Poor fellow, what else could he do?"

Then Papa laughed and laughed, so also all others, till Papa's throat got parched. Mataji came in and asked why all were laughing so much. Papa briefly repeated the experience of the Bhagavatar. She also joined in the laughter. "Now Ramdas must have another peppermint ; his throat is all dry," said Papa. S. got up and gave him a peppermint.

September 28, 1953

189. 9-45 p.m. It was Papa's bedtime. Papa called Mataji and she
What people came and stood by Papa's side.
expect from
Saints

Papa : "There is a letter from Mukund Pai. He wants to send his wife and children here for the Dassera holidays. It seems he is in great trouble. His financial condition is bad. He writes that there is no improvement even after he met Ramdas."

Mataji : "He writes about financial conditions. Does he not ?"

Papa : "Then what else ? Do you think all those who come here are for God-realisation ? Don't be under that illusion any more. They want more money, better business and so on and so forth. See the case of Bansidharbhai. He is worrying day and night because his son has gone to the Himalayas on an expedition."

Mataji stood silent for a few seconds and went out to the hall.

S : "Papa, when people come to saints with certain desires . . . "

Papa (*interrupting*) : "Their desires get strengthened!"

S. laughed with Papa, and continued : "They wish to have their desires fulfilled, and in course of time they get what they want. But in the presence of saints, don't they get a desire for the higher life?"

Papa : "Don't you see many people going to saints ? How many are really benefited ? Very few. The rest remain as they were. Some feel that they made a mistake in coming here, and so run away the next moment."

S : "Perhaps that was the case with the Australian youth who came here some months back. He found out he came to the wrong place and went away the next morning."

Papa : "Yes, that is the type."

S : "So, does Papa say that most of the people who come here gain nothing spiritually?"

Papa : "Some of them abuse us and go. They scoff at us."

S : "If that is the case, when are they to turn to God?"

Papa : "They must get knocks and hits and then satsang. Then alone the awakening comes."

190. Papa turned to Gopal and talked to him about the Udyog Shala for
Grace a few minutes. Then again to S. : "You see if saints' grace can
impartial- transform all those who come in contact with them, thousands must
Receptivity have been transformed here. That is not what we see. There seems
differs-Story to exist another condition to be fulfilled before the transformation
of takes place. Grace is impartial. But the power of receptivity is
Purandharadas different in different people."

S : "Papa, is it correct to say that many are not benefited at all ? Can they go away without any impression being formed in their minds?"

Papa : "We cannot say that they go without any impression. A moment may come, when they are sorely tried by the world. All hopes gone, they will remember their visit to the saint, and from that moment they will think of God. So a subtle impression which may take some shape later must be there. The contact does not go in vain. Purandharadas was a rich businessman but very miserly. God in the form of a Haridas went to him daily for six months begging for some help for the upanayana of his son."

S : "God went to him like that daily for six months ! Not an ordinary job !"

Papa : "God must have had a very hard time with him. Ramdas will tell you the whole story :

'The rich merchant refused to give any help to Haridas, abused him and sent him away everyday. This continued for six months. At last he threw a bad coin to Haridas, who then went to the merchant's wife and narrated how he had been going to a merchant daily for six months and finally got a bad coin from that rascal. The wife knew whom he was referring to and did not like her husband to be called a rascal. She tried to send that Haridas away saying, 'What do you want ? I can only give you some grains.'

Haridas : No. I want money.

Woman : I have not got any money.

Haridas : If you have a mind to give, you have enough to give. You have your nose-ornament with a diamond on it. That will quite serve my purpose.

She hesitated.

Haridas : If you do not like to give, I shall go somewhere else.

Woman : No, no. You are God Himself come here. How can I allow you to go away without giving anything ? She then removed the ornament and was about to give it to that Haridas.

Haridas : What will your husband do when he hears about it ?

Woman : What does it matter, I am prepared even to give my life to you.

Haridas : Then say 'Krishnarpanam' and give.

Woman : (*giving the ornament to Haridas*) "Krishnarpanam."

Haridas then went straight to the merchant (her husband) under the pretext of selling it. Seeing Haridas coming, the merchant in a contemptuous tone, asked, 'Shameless fellow, have you come again ?'

Haridas : I have come here to do business, not to beg. Take this and give me its price.

The merchant took the ornament from Haridas. On looking at it, he could recognise that it was his wife's nose-ornament.

Merchant : From where did you get this jewel ?

Haridas : A generous woman gave it to me as a present.

Merchant : Yes, thief, is it true that you got it as a present ?

Haridas : What, thief ! Krishna also was a thief !

Merchant : If Krishna was a thief, must you also be one ? Come here tomorrow, I shall deal with you then.

Haridas left, and the merchant in a fit of rage went straight to his house and knocked. Hearing the knocks, his wife thought it was another devotee come to meet her.

Wife : Is that Gopaladasayya ?

Merchant : Ha ! Gopaladasayya. I shall show you Gopaladasayya by a slap on your cheek. Open the door.

The door was opened.

Merchant : What did you give to that beggar ?

Wife : I gave him alms.

Merchant : What alms ?

Wife : I gave him some maize.

Merchant : You gave him your nose-ornament with a diamond as big as a maize. Where is your nose-ornament ? Tell me.

Wife : I have kept it in the pooja room.

Merchant : Bring it here immediately.

Wife : I shall do Tulsipooja and then go to the pooja room to get it.

Merchant : Now you have to go and take refuge in Tulsi only.

She was now greatly agitated. She performed her usual pooja to Tulsi and, with folded hands, prayed : O Mother, save me from this situation. If you are not going to help me now, I must commit suicide.

With her eyes closed, she was standing still. There was a sudden 'Tuk' noise. She opened her eyes. Lo ! Her nose-ornament had dropped down from somewhere, near the Tulsi !!! She took it to her husband.

Merchant : Ha ! how could this come here ? I had locked it in my box in the shop.

He ran up to his shop and found it was not in the box where he had kept it.

Then came the great transformation. That Haridas, whom he hated and despised for six months daily, had gone away. The merchant was thirsting for a look at him. He started wailing : "O Haridas, I must see you. Without having a look at you I cannot live for another minute. Come to me."

Then came a voice from heaven : "Why do you want to see that Haridas's form ? I shall come in my own form."

Suddenly there was a flash of light and there stood Lord Krishna, giving darshan to the miserly merchant. He no more remained a miser, no more a merchant. He distributed all his wealth to the devotees and, with his wife, left for Vijayanagar to serve in the temple of Vijaya Vithoba. There he came to be known as 'Purandharadas'.

191. Those who come to scoff remain to pray	"So the story runs. See, the brahmin Haridas, who was much despised, and ill-treated, was adored by the merchant intensely. Later the merchant could not live for a second without seeing that Haridas. So also, even people who scoff at saints realise their greatness one day or other and give their lives to them. So, you see, there are cases where people who came to scoff remained to pray."
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XXIII

Anandashram, October 1, 1953

192. It was the day of Nama Likhit Japa Yajna begun in connection with
Likhit Japa the Silver Jubilee celebration of Mataji's renunciation. P.S.G. Rao
Yajna of Madras, who was then in the ashram had donated for a feast that
 day. He was anxious that he should take meal along with Mataji.
So when Mataji was ready, she sent word to all those who had not taken meal.
Opposite to Mataji sat Rao, S. and others.

Rao (to S.) : "Did you see how many pamphlets were there in the packet that we brought ? I mean the pamphlets announcing the Likhit Japa Yajna."

S : "No, I did not see the packet at all."

Mataji : "How many have enrolled themselves for the Likhit Japa Yajna, and how many are needed ?"

S : "Reckoning at the rate of two hundred Mantras a day, for each devotee, we need altogether one thousand seven hundred sixtynine members, to be exact. But to be on the safe side, it is necessary to have two thousand members. We need seven hundred families, taking three persons for each family on the average."

Rao : "Oh, so many ! We must get them soon."

Mataji : "Enlisting them is easy, but they must keep up the enthusiasm and carry on till the end in order to reach the target."

193. Rao : "If you shower your grace on them, they all will be able
Grace for surely to complete the yajna successfully."
Sadhana

Mataji : "They must have the determination to do it. In their worldly activities, in order to get things done they make firm resolutions themselves and stick to them till they succeed. For making money and managing business enterprises, they are very active, firm and strong-willed. But in spiritual matters alone they say, 'If you

make us do by your grace, we will do so.' This is how they escape. If you all really feel that saints should make you do your sadhana, then it should be equally applicable to your worldly activities also. There you are not prepared to throw the responsibility on them, and you are able to put forth your own effort. So, why not in regard to sadhana also ?"

194. Mataji (to Rao) : "Because of you, we all had a feast today ;
'I am the otherwise, we would have had our usual simple meal."
poorest of
the poor'— S : "He wanted to arrange for a big feeding of the poor. When
Mataji you said that it would be difficult to make arrangements for that
and the crowd would be unmanageable, he dropped the idea
and we only had the feast."

Mataji : "Why ? This is also poor-feeding. Is it not ? Are we not all poor ? Among the so-called poor, many possess money. It will be hard to find even a small number who do not have any money at all. But look at me. I do not own anything. I am the poorest of the poor. So you must feed me first. Am I not correct ?"

Rao : "We first take from you, and then we give."

Mataji : "If anybody gives me anything, of course I distribute it among all. I cannot keep anything for myself."

195. S. had given in the morning some manuscripts to Papa for approval
'Publish only before they were got ready for the press. S. went to Papa's room
what all can at 4 p.m. Papa was busy showing the photo albums to Ammini.
understand" Mataji also was in Papa's room. The manuscripts given to Papa in
the morning were on the table.

S (to Mataji) : "Did Papa read out anything from these manuscripts to you ?"

Mataji : "Yes, Papa read out three articles and one epistle. I feel that you should cut out from that the portion relating to ahimsa. Papa is making some references to Gandhiji there. It is better such controversial points are not published now. You may publish them some years hence."

S : "Is it not enough if mention of Gandhiji is not made in the article ? May not the rest of the matter go as it is ?"

Mataji : "It is better that the whole para is removed. What Papa has said there about non-violence is indeed right, but how many can understand it ? It will be helpful only to a few sadhakas, How many real and earnest sadhakas are there ?

Not even one in a thousand. To help one in a thousand, we should not disturb the minds of the remaining readers. What we publish should be easily understandable, easily digestible, by all readers. We cannot feed alike a child of four years and a baby of two months with the same sort of food. We give milk to the baby and rice to the grown-up child. If we start giving rice to the baby also, the consequence will be disastrous. If you publish the matter even without making any reference to Gandhiji's name, it will be clear to the readers from the context that the remarks relate to Gandhiji's views. When his followers read them, there will be unnecessary discussions, heated arguments and misunderstandings over this issue. So it is better to leave this matter for publication on a later date. What is not good now may prove to be good in the future."

S : "If, by publishing it now, we shall be doing more disservice than service, it is better we refrain from doing so."

196. Mataji : "Yes. It is better we do not publish it now. Did you catch my point ? (*laughing*). I am always asking people, 'Did you understand ?' I do so to make sure if they have really understood what I say. This has become a sort of habit with me now. I ask like that because I often find that people do not understand my words correctly. I talk to them and they listen and nod their heads, as if they have understood everything. But when I ask them to explain and restate what I had said, I find they are not able to do so. Thus I once thought A. understood me well when I was talking to her about my early life and experiences. One day, after talking to her for some time, I wanted to ascertain how far she had grasped my narrative, and I asked her some questions on certain points. Then I found she was not able to answer correctly any. That is why I am not quite confident when anybody wants to write anything about me or my talks. You must have read what has been written by others about my talks with them. Are they faithful records of my views?"

S : "Who has written ?"

Mataji : "So many have attempted. But I do not encourage them."

197. 9 p.m. Papa was coming from the bhajan-hall to his room followed by S. Papa had in his hand the manuscripts S. had given him for approval. Showing them to S. he observed: "Mataji does not wish that the portion relating to ahimsa in this manuscript should be published now."

Himsa/
Ahimsa —
mental
attitude
counts

S: "Mataji told me also. On this point of ahimsa, Papa, I was talking to Swami Atmananda a few minutes back. It seems he once asked Gandhiji why in his foreword to the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* he wrote that Sri Ramakrishna was a votary of ahimsa, when he knew that Sri Ramakrishna used to eat fish and did not mind killing bugs. Then Gandhiji in his reply to Swami Atmananda told a story about Tolstoy. Tolstoy was an ardent advocate of non-violence and a vegetarian too. But he was taking eggs daily. One of his friends asked him if eating eggs did not amount to killing life. Tolstoy thought about it for a while and replied, 'Yes, I ought to have stopped taking eggs. At least from now I shall stop it.' It was the force of habit that made Tolstoy continue taking eggs even after becoming a votary of non-violence, and when he was reminded of the anomaly, he at once stopped the practice. Similarly, according to Gandhiji, the implication is that Sri Ramakrishna too might have been eating fish only by force of mere habit. I asked Atmananda if he was satisfied with Gandhiji's reply. He said he was not. But, he added, he did not pursue the topic with Gandhiji. Atmananda also told me that Gandhiji himself was not quite free from the force of habit. Gandhiji himself once told Atmananda that though he was convinced that he should travel only by the 3rd class he was still going in the 2nd class by mere force of habit."

Papa: "It was all right so far as Gandhiji was concerned. But the case of Sri Ramakrishna was quite different. Unlike Gandhiji and Tolstoy, Sri Ramakrishna never felt sorry for what he did. Sri Ramakrishna used to take fish and kill bugs with the full consciousness of what he did and not by mere force of habit. He even asked some of his disciples to kill bugs and mosquitoes. His justification was that, if they were not killed, they would be disturbing their meditation. Sri Ramakrishna knew that the essence of ahimsa lay in the heart, that outwardly absolute ahimsa was not possible and that, without committing a minimum of the so-called himsa, living in this world was impossible for any one."

Continuing, Papa said, "Gandhiji was always careful to observe that he was only experimenting with the great ideal. One thing is clear. This question of himsa and ahimsa—violence and non-violence—is not a matter merely of external actions. It is primarily a question of one's inner spirit and mental attitude. One can be a true votary of ahimsa and yet strike or kill another, provided one does so without hatred, with a pure heart, full of love for the persons so dealt with. One must have the full consciousness that his actions are prompted by God's will and that he is only an instrument in the hands of the divine. In fact, such a one, who has dedicated all his actions to God, is free from all sense of doership or agency. He knows that God alone is the doer and that the individual is only a medium for the execution of God's will. He is free from ill-will, hatred or selfish motives. Another person may be externally non-violent, avoiding acts that cause injury to any one. But his mind may not be pure. Love may not have entered his heart. He may not be free from selfishness. Such a one, in spite of his outward non-violence, cannot be said to be

a true votary of ahimsa. His conduct may seem to be non-violent outwardly, but inwardly he will be impure, tainted by egoism, passion, prejudice and selfish motive. He may be harming many silently, though outwardly he may not commit any violent act.

"A true votary of ahimsa has love and purity of heart. He is quite free from ego-sense. His is a life entirely dedicated to the divine. He is always aware that he is only an instrument for working out God's will. He has no self-interest to serve. He works only for the good of the world."

Papa concluded by observing: "There is no doubt that Gandhiji was a true votary of this type. His non-violence was rooted in love and purity. From the way he gave sanction for the mercy-killing of a suffering calf in his ashram, it is also clear that he did not go merely by external actions and that he was guided by the underlying spirit behind external acts."

October 2, 1953

198.	9-30 a.m. Papa started on his usual rounds, from the ashram. S.
Papa's Love	was following him. Though S. had been observing every day Papa's
for	love for Ramkishor expressing itself in many extraordinary ways,
Ramkishor	that day he was particularly struck by what he had witnessed.

The previous evening, when Papa was returning from his evening walk, Ramkishor took Papa to the kitchen and asked him to stand by the side of the road facing the old cowshed—then used as a lumber room. He then went inside, brought out three sheaves of paddy stalks, placed two stones on the ground and started threshing the stalks. In a few minutes the grains were all separated. In the meantime Papa was watching the boy and giving him certain tips now and then to do the threshing properly. (The paddy was cultivated by Ramkishor in a small plot which he had prepared in front of his house. The sowing and harvesting were done partly by him and partly under his supervision). Papa was standing there for more than half an hour. Generally he used to feel very tired when he returned from the evening walk, and somebody had to massage his legs when he sat on the chair, breathing heavily. But the previous evening though the walk was much longer than usual, Papa stood there for over half an hour and did not feel he was tired. S. felt that for anything else however important, Papa would not have cared to stand there at that time, as he did then.

The collected paddy was then taken in a plate and kept in Papa's room. Now for that morning's incident. Papa and S. together were in the garden. Ramkishor came running and told Papa that he had to dry his paddy. He wanted to know where and how he should do it. Papa suggested something, to which Ramkishor did not agree. Again, another suggestion from Papa did not meet with Ramkishor's approval.

Then Papa said, 'That can be done here in the garden. Get a bamboo-mat and a wire-netting, spread the paddy on the bamboo-mat, and cover the same with the wire-netting so that birds cannot pick the grains.' Papa waited in the sun till Ramkishor got those things and then gave him the key to open the room and get the plate of paddy. When it was brought, Papa waited again to see that he did it all right. He did not do it correctly. Papa then directed him to do it in the proper way. Papa finally asked him to collect the hay and spread it on the stone seats in the garden to dry.

It was worth noticing how Papa was talking to Ramkishor and made him do things. Papa's love for the boy, expressing itself in manifold ways, could not be ordinary love. Papa did not seem to be caring for anything else, when the boy was near him. When he was not near, Papa appeared to be all the more anxious about him. If any one, who had not known and accepted Papa as a saint or guru had witnessed Papa dealing thus with the boy, he would be inclined to consider it as nothing more than a deep-rooted attachment similar to that of an old man to his grandson. Papa appeared to be so much concerned with the boy. But those who had known Papa could not take it as mere attachment. They could not say what it was and what it was going to be.

October 3, 1953

<p>199. Talk of Surrender easy—To control Lower Nature, no joke</p>	<p>8 a.m. Papa's room. Mataji was in the passage and Papa was in the room. P.S.G. Rao and his wife were coming to meet Papa after breakfast.</p> <p>Rao was greatly interested in collecting relics of great saints for his museum at home. He had gathered many things that were used by Ramana Maharshi, Swami Narayan, Ma Anandamayee, Papa and other saints. He wanted to have more things.</p>
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Rao (*with a fountain pen in his hand*): "Mataji, I have come to loot Papa's pen and some more things."

He then entered, gave his pen to Papa and asked for Papa's pen. Papa took out his pen and gave it to Rao as prasad.

Rao: "I want to take Papa's watch also. But I cannot give another watch to Papa. I have got only a wrist watch. Will Papa have it?"

Papa: "No. No. Ramdas does not wear a wrist watch."

Mataji: "You may ask Papa to have your watch with him for a few minutes and then take it as his prasad."

Rao (*taking the watch from his hand and tying the same to Papa's hand*): "That won't do, Mataji, I want something that Papa has been using for some years."

Mataji: "You must now take your watch back from Papa."

Rao: "Everything that belongs to me is Papa's. I have surrendered myself to Papa."

Mataji: "That is all mere talk. If you have really surrendered to Papa, you won't feel like taking things and keeping them there at your place. That is not surrender. No need to take from here when everything you have is Papa's."

Rao: "No, Mataji. That is also his house. That is how we feel about it. When Papa is not physically there, let us keep some of his things at least."

Mataji then suggested to Papa that if Rao was so particular he might be given the watch that was kept on Papa's table. Papa took it and gave it to Rao and also took out the string from his watch and passed it on to Rao.

Mataji left the room for the dining-hall, followed by Swami Atmananda and Subbaram and S. While taking tiffin, Mataji, addressing S. sitting in front of her, referred to Rao's request for prasad.

Mataji: "This talk of surrender is only lip-deep. If there is real surrender, the sense of possession completely disappears. One may not be particular about keeping or storing things. Even if one keeps things and enjoys doing so, one will part with those things with the same joy as one had while keeping them. To talk of surrender is very easy. You must have seen H.'s letters to Papa; how he was pouring out his heart in them. In every letter, he wrote that he had surrendered everything to Papa."

S: "H.'s letters are really inspiring to read."

Mataji: "And see what has happened to him. I do not say that he had not gained anything in those days. Without attaining something he could not have moved so closely with and opened his heart to Papa. But his lower nature became too strong for him. It is not a joke to control the lower nature and go beyond it.

"When deep-rooted habits are there, if he comes and unburdens himself to Papa, and if Papa directs his mind towards him, he is sure to be freed from the clutches of his lower nature. But he must frankly tell everything. Recently a young woman had come here. Her case was similar to mine. I came out of the house, as the danger of losing my chastity was imminent even inside the house. When I told Papa everything, I was saved. So also was this woman troubled at home, I told her

to tell everything frankly to Papa. If Papa says, 'That will not happen,' that is enough to save her. She was hesitating. Why should she hesitate? When we consider Papa as our mother, why should we not tell him all secrets? She finally told Papa."

200. After breakfast, Swami Atmananda and S. came to Papa's room, where P.S.G. Rao was talking to Papa. Addressing S., Rao said, 'I have now completed the loot. See.'
Ramnam is the Technique

S: "Oh, you have managed to get the cane also! You are not an ordinary looter."

Rao: "I am an L.M.G (Loot Master General)."

Swami Atmananda (to Rao): "I am going to loot you before you go."

S: "He is going tomorrow morning."

Swami Atmananda: "I must look to it today itself."

Papa: "You are going to loot the looter. Now you must leave Ramdas so that he may reply to some letters."

Rao got up and, with folded arms, requested in a low tone: "Papa, you must burn me just as Bhagavan burnt you, as you described last night."

Papa (smiling): "For that, you must come to Ramdas like dry wood. Ramdas went to Bhagavan like a dry log, ready to catch fire."

Rao: "How to become like dry wood? You must teach us the technique."

Papa: "Ramnam. That is the technique."

Rao: "Papa, I must get dehydrated. Sure."

Papa: "Take more and more Ramnam."

201. 10 a.m. Papa was seated on a chair in the portico of Dr. Rama-
Argument for swami's house. Ramachandra Rao, Lakshmi Narasimhiah and S. were
argument's with him.
sake

Papa (to C. R. Rao): "How is your health now?"

Ramachandra Rao: "You must know, Papa."

Papa (to C.L.N.) : "How is his health now ? Is it not better ?"

C.L.N. : "Yes, it is much better."

Papa : "So, Lakshmi Narasimhiah certifies that your health is all right."

Ramachandra Rao : "His certificate is no good. I want your certificate. You are the person to admit us and discharge us."

Papa (to C.L.N.) : "He does not care for your certificate. Why is it ?"

C. L. N : "He has no confidence in me."

Papa (to Ramachandra Rao) : "Are you and Ramdas different ?"

Ramachandra Rao : "If that is the case, why should Papa have to ask if I am all right ? Who is all right and who is not all right, if there is only one ?"

Papa : "That is all right in the static Spirit. In the world-play or dynamic aspect of names and forms we have to do all things. He Himself is in many forms—in healthy forms and diseased forms."

R. Rao : "So, this is one of His diseased forms."

Papa (after a few minutes) : "There are persons who, even when they know that what they talk is wrong, go on arguing to establish that they are right. They will hold forth all arguments in their favour to outwit the other person. Saintly souls are more or less of that type !"

R. Rao : "So, you are of that type." (Papa has a good laugh).

202. At noon in the dining-hall. Mataji was having lunch. In front of her was Swami Atmananda and others.
Mataji frank only with a few S : "Mataji, what did you tell P.S.G. Rao this morning when he was talking about the watch ?"

Mataji : "I told him that the surrender he was speaking about was a mere talk."

S : "Not that point. Before he said that he had surrendered himself to Papa, he was talking about something."

Mataji : "I do not remember. If you had asked me in the morning I would have told you, but now everything has gone underneath the tea. Was Rao disturbed on that account ? Did he feel bad ?"

S : "I did not talk to him about it."

Mataji : "I generally do not talk to all like that, even though I may have known them for years. But to some I give replies spontaneously even if I meet them only for the first time. You have all been here for many years but I do not talk to you that way. Even if I notice anything untoward, in many cases I do not like telling them anything. Even if I feel like correcting them, something prevents me from doing so. I feel as if there is some catch in the throat. Only with very few people I speak out frankly about what they ought to do. You know how I used to talk to Natverlal. Another is Dr. Ramaswamy. But with his sister and wife I do not talk like that. It is not always good to talk like that, because they might feel hurt and there is every chance of their ego-sense rising up and of their thinking why I should find fault with them alone. I always used to take Rame and Gopal to task. I used to deliver sermons to them almost every day. I realised later on that it was no use. But all the same I could not help advising them, and I did it spontaneously. When Subbarao, Moholkar and Gunda were here I used to correct Gunda often when I felt he ought to have acted differently in certain cases. But in the case of Moholkar and Subbarao, I was not feeling like doing so."

4-30 p.m. Papa was seated on the cement bench in front of ashram. P.S.G. Rao, his wife and some ashramites were getting ready to go to the Hanuman Mandir.

S : "Is Papa not going for a walk today?"

Papa : "Yes. We shall go for a short walk."

Papa and S. together went out towards the school and came back in fifteen minutes.

Papa's chair was brought out so that he might sit comfortably in the open. The post also arrived. Papa received and looked into the letters. Swami Atmananda came and sat by Papa's side on the mat spread there. *The Hindu* received with the post was lying on Papa's lap, yet unopened. Atmananda slowly pulled it, at the same time asking for Papa's permission.

Papa : "Do you still have a craving for it? Ramdas thought you are free from it. Last time when you came here, you had perhaps less desire to read newspapers. Now you have got your old craving back."

Swami Atmananda : "No craving, Papa. Just to see the news headlines. That is all."

Papa : "Any way you are caught again in it."

Very soon Atmananda went through the paper and returned it to Papa, saying, "Papa, I have finished. That is all I wanted it for."

Papa : "Good, you have finished so soon. Now you can go and do your japa."

P. S. G. Rao had gone to Mataji in the morning and asked her for her used saree as prasad, to be kept in his museum of relics. Mataji, it seemed, told him that she had only two sarees and she could not spare any. She further asked him why he should worry about keeping such things. Rao was disappointed, but a minute later Mataji told him that she would give him a saree provided he purchased a new one for her. He readily agreed and asked Keshav Bhat to bring four sarees, so that Mataji might select one. Keshav Bhat accordingly brought four sarees from the bazaar. Rao took them to Mataji and requested her to select one for herself.

Mataji : "I am not going to select anything, whatever you give is all right."

Rao : "I asked you to select so that you may take whichever you like."

Mataji : "If you leave it to me to select I may take all."

Rao (*with delight*) : "That is very good."

He took his purse and paid Keshav Bhat the value of all the four sarees.

Subbaram (*who was standing near*) : "Rao, whatever it be, she is not going to keep more than two with her."

Rao (*to Mataji*) : "Mataji, one thing I would like to request you ; you should wear all the sarees."

Mataji : "I will give away the extra ones."

Rao : "You may give away after wearing at least once."

Mataji : "That is all right. That is what I do."

So Rao was satisfied with the bargain. Mataji might have already in view who should be given the extra sarees. So both were happy, and those who might receive the sarees from her the next day or on any future day would be happy and blessed too.

XXIV

Anandashram, October 3, 1953

203. 9-45 p.m. It was Papa's bedtime. Mataji was massaging Papa's
Ramnam legs and S. his back. Subbaram and Ramachandra were fanning
sweeter than him. Shivashanker (the Rajasthan friend) was sitting a few feet
Nectar away. Papa, of his own accord, started talking about Ramnam.

Papa : "Ramnam is so sweet ; so sweet that even nectar is nothing before it. It is a glorious pill, sweeter than nectar itself. Repetition of Ramnam is the easiest and best sadhana. Still how many take to Ramnam ? They take to all other sadhanas like hathayoga, rajayoga, jnanayoga, and so on. All these yogas will not bring them the bliss and peace supreme that Ramnam can bring. They might bring forth siddhis and bind the sadhakas again to the world."

Shivashanker : "Nowadays there are a few disciples but a lot of gurus. Everyone prefers to be a guru but not a disciple."

Papa (*laughing*) : "Instead of repeating Ramnam oneself, one goes on asking others to repeat it. That is easier."

204. Subbaram : "In our houses they say that one should take God's
Worries of name always and other spiritual practices only after retirement from
the aged service. But some saints say that the mind will not stay on God if
hamper spiritual practice is started only after sixty years or so."
sadhana

Papa : "Why do you ask this question ? What is your age now ?"

Subbaram : "Thirty-one."

Papa : "When did you start singing bhajan ?"

Subbaram : "About ten years back."

Papa : "Were you not singing before, and if so what songs ?"

Subbaram : "Any song that appealed to me."

Papa : "So after allowing your mind to roam about like a wild bull, did you not find it difficult when you wanted to control it ten years back?"

Subbaram : "Yes, very much."

Papa : "Then, what do you think of the person who had allowed his mind to wander for sixty years like an angry, wild bull? Can he easily catch the bull and tie it to a post?"

Subbaram : "No, Papa."

Papa : "How can he take God's name with thousand and one worries in his head? He has his children and grandchildren. If a child is sick, the old man carries it to the doctor or takes a bottle and goes and weeps before the doctor to cure the child. Another day there is something else for the old man to worry about. It goes on like that. Where is the time for him to think of God or repeat His holy, sweet name? When Ramdas was in Srinagar, an old man was coming to see him almost everyday from a distance of fourteen miles. One day he was in tears when he came to Ramdas. Without uttering a word, he took Ramdas's feet and placed them on his chest. Ramdas, with great difficulty managed to hold on leaning against the wall and remain in that position. Ramdas, in wonder, asked the old man, "Ramji, what is the matter?"

Old man : "Swamiji, my grandson is seriously ill. Please bless him so that he may recover from his illness."

Ramdas consoled him saying, "By Ram's will, your grandson will be all right." He had great faith in Ramdas and the result was that his grandson was all right in a couple of days. After two or three days the old man again came to Ramdas with tears in his eyes and started complaining, 'Swamiji, my wife, who is very old, had a fall this morning and she has a fracture in her leg. Please, please bless her so that she may be all right soon.' Ramdas said, "Don't fear, by Ram's will, your wife will be all right." Again his faith worked wonderfully and his wife recovered soon. Four more days passed, the old man came again.

Ramdas : "What is the matter? Who is ill now?"

Old man : "By your blessings, all are well, Swamiji. But my son is not able to pull on with the low salary he is getting here. There is a better chance for him in another place and if you bless him he will surely get the new job. Swamiji, please bless him."

Ramdas : "Yes. By Ram's will, he may get the transfer on a better grade."

On the third day the old man was there saying, 'Swamiji, my son has got the order for transfer on promotion, by your blessings. But his wife has severe earache. She is not able to accompany him to the new place. Please bless her so that she may become fit to go with her husband'.

Ramdas : "By Ram's will, she will be all right."

The old man happily went away.

"Like this, the whole life passes away. Not a minute's peace of mind. That is what happens to old men. In Jhansi there is a Ram. He says he will go on with his usual business of money-lending at a high rate of interest, uttering a lot of lies everyday. He wants Ramdas to be with him once in four or five months. He would then serve Ramdas with all love and devotion so that all his sins committed so far may be washed away. When Ramdas goes from there, again starts his business, the sins of which he will wash away when he meets Ramdas next time. His argument, as he told Ramdas, is, 'I am a child playing in the mud and soiling my clothes. You are my mother and when I, the dirty child, come to you, it is your duty to wash me clean; and again I may go and play in the same mud, and again you will have to wash me'. That is his argument. What sadhana can old men do then? If you ask them to repeat Ramnam, they say Ramnam does not come on their tongue. Then what comes on their tongue? Grandson's name !!!"

Laughing and laughing, Papa got up and sat on the cot.

S : "Then the grandson must be given God's name."

Papa : "Even then, he may be calling that name but of whom will he be thinking? Only the grandson, not God."

Papa got up from the cot, again laughing. Going near Shivashanker he asked, "What do you say? How do you like that bhakti?"

Shivashanker : "What? Of the old man asking blessings for the grandson?"

All laughed again.

S : "Shivashanker is still in the heights of Kashmir, not yet come down to Jhansi."

Papa : "It is a cool place and Jhansi is hot. (to Shivashanker) We have come down from Srinagar long ago and are talking about a friend in Jhansi."

Shivashanker kept quiet, as he had apparently not heard what was being talked about the Jhansi devotee.

205. 9 p.m. S. was coming to the bhajan-hall. When he entered he
'No one my saw Papa moving about in the hall and a few devotees were also
Bhakta'— there. Some were writing Ramnam. Mataji was in the room just to
Mataji the south of the bhajan-hall and was arranging certain things in one
of the corner wall-almirahs. Papa was talking from the hall to
Mataji about Ramnam-writing and the total number written that day.

Papa : "Gopal is not writing even two hundred daily; his figure is one hundred, one hundred and eight or maximum one hundred and fourteen."

S (*intervening*) : "Papa, Gopal writes only less than two hundred. That too, for the Japa Yajna started in connection with Mataji's, his Mataji's Silver Jubilee celebration."

Papa : "That is the wonder. Being her bhakta, he writes only less than two hundred."

Mataji heard this remark of Papa and said, "No. There is nobody who is my bhakta."

Papa : "Gopal is your bhakta, what doubt is there?"

Mataji : "No, no."

Papa (*to S.*) : "If Ramdas says this in Gopal's presence, he gets puffed up and goes about like a bird fluttering its wings. If he has wings, of course, he would be fluttering them."

A few minutes before going to sleep, Papa enquired of Mataji about Champak-bhai, the son of Narottamdas Shah, who had come from Bombay that evening.

Mataji : "Who ? Your bhakta ?"

Papa : "You mean Champak ? Why do you say he is Ramdas's bhakta ?"

Mataji : "You don't like it very much when told so, do you ? I also feel exactly like that when you say Gopal is my bhakta ?"

Papa : "What do you mean ? Gopal is your bhakta. He has so much love and devotion for you."

Mataji : "If he has no love for others, what is the use of being a bhakta ?"

Papa : "He is your bhakta, worshipping your saguna svarup. He has not yet gone beyond it to the nirguna svarup. You have to help him to go beyond."

Mataji : "No such thing. I do not want you to say so and so is my bhakta and so on. You have been teasing me with such jokes. I shall now tell you who your bhaktas are and let me see how you feel about it. I shall pay you back in the same coin."

Papa : "Yes, you must do it. Ramdas is a bit naughty. If he has no ego-sense, he will not take it amiss ; and if he has ego-sense, that will disappear by what you say."

Papa then got into the mosquito net and went to sleep. Others also retired to their respective places.

October 6, 1953

206. 9-45 p.m. It was Papa's bedtime. Parvatibai was fanning Papa
"If you eat, the whole world eats" from one side and Ramachandra from the other.
Ramachandra : "Some arrow-root powder has been brought from Kasaragod."

Papa : "That is good. How nice to have some cakes made of it ! A little of butter added will make it so fine. Ah! Ramdas's mouth is watering at the very thought of it."

Motiben : "Then we shall have it prepared tomorrow itself."

Parvatibai : "Arrow-root is very good, nice and cooling."

Papa : "Is it ? That is exactly what Ramdas wants. Don't forget to keep some butter too. *(after a little while)* What a desire to eat ! How he craves to eat arrow-root cakes !"

Parvatibai : "If it is not for eating, why has Ram created all these things?"

Papa : "Ah, but He says we must conquer our senses, we should control our diet by avoiding or reducing that which we like most. How selfish is Ramdas ! He does not say that arrow-root cakes should be prepared and given to all, but wants only for himself !"

Parvatibai : "If you eat, the whole world eats. See what happened when Krishna took the one piece of green leaf from Draupadi's pot. The whole party of Durvasa felt they had eaten a hearty meal."

Papa : "When Ramdas asks Ram why Ramdas is after nice food, do you know what He says ? He says, 'You had enough of fasting, when you were doing sadhana. The person who was fasting is gone now, and I am there in his place. I do not want to fast, I must eat.' That is what He says. Ramdas wants to eat fine things now. Nowadays He is reminding Ramdas of drumsticks. Ramdas has told Him that they are not available now and so He has to be patient for some time."

Motiben : "On the tree near Dr. Ramaswamy's house, there are drumsticks.

Parvatibai : "Even if they are not available, can't Ram make them available tomorrow if He wants ?"

Papa : "So you expect to see two or three drumsticks ready on the tree tomorrow, do you ? It is not difficult for Ram to get anything done. But He does not seem to do as we want. In the midst of so many things, is He going to produce drumsticks tomorrow ?"

Motiben : "When He is doing so many things, why can't He make the drumsticks also ?"

Papa : "If He wants, He will do it. But not as we want. Ramdas has consoled Him and asked Him to keep quiet for some time. He won't be in a hurry. Now he has got the arrow-root cakes getting prepared tomorrow. He won't bother about drumsticks any more. When we are talking about Him, He is laughing."

Saying this, Papa got up and laughed with others for a while.

October 7, 1953 (Mahalaya Amavasya)

207. It was Mataji's birthday. It had been decided that there need not be special celebration on that account at the ashram. But from early morning people started pouring in. Tiffin had to be prepared many times and so also rice. With the removal of the pandal in front of the dining-hall, the dining space had been very much reduced. Consequently it took a longer time for service, besides the delay caused in preparing rice again and again. The last batch (while yet a few workers remained) sat for meal at 6-30 p.m. This batch consisted of Mataji, M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram, S. and a few others. As Mataji was continuously in the kitchen from the morning, she was having a bad headache. She noticed also that all the workers were tired. The service was not to her satisfaction, as one of two batches in between could not be served proper quantity of rice. With these thoughts in her mind she said (*addressing S. and others sitting opposite to her*) : What is the use of these celebrations ? Celebrations must give a certain amount of internal peace and joy to

all those who take part in them. But what happens is entirely different. Those who cook get so much tired that they become anxious when the whole thing would end. Those who serve are equally tired. What about those who take food? If everything goes on well and in time, they feel a bit happy. But if there is some delay, or if things prepared are not tasty and sufficient, they also become unhappy. Then who is happy by these celebrations? They lose even the peace and joy they get on ordinary days with simple food and the daily routine."

S : "But, is it not the nature of the mind to crave for some excitement in the way of celebrations when all have been quiet for some time?"

Mataji : "No, not at all, so far as I am concerned. Even in a dream I won't wish for any celebration, let alone in the waking state."

Radhabai who was sitting by Mataji's side was very unhappy to see Mataji also going without food till 6-30 p.m. She now got an opportunity to tell Mataji about it.

Radhabai : "If you had taken your food earlier, everything would have gone on all right without any difficulty anywhere. But you purposely fasted as you wanted to know for yourself how others would feel when kept waiting for meal."

Mataji (*laughing*) : "No, no, not so."

October 9, 1953

208. 7 p.m. S. was taking his evening food in the dining-hall. By his
Animals have side were sitting the boys Ganesh, Kishor and Subramania. After a
their while, Mataji came and joined them. Before doing so, she asked
reactions Ganesh, "May I sit by your side? You have no objection, have
 you?" The boy only smiled at her, and she took her seat. A little
rice and vegetables were served to her.

S : "Mataji, this evening the cart could not be sent to the station. Did Ahmed (the cartman) tell you?"

Mataji : "Yes, Ahmed came and said that Govinda, one of the bullocks, purchased last year, does not allow him to go near him. At the very sight of Ahmed, Govinda gets furious and attempts to butt him."

S : "Why so, all on a sudden? Both the bullocks were quiet fellows all these days. Ahmed took me to the goshala and showed me how Govinda behaved with him. When about five or six of us together went near Govinda, he appeared not to be concerned with any one except Ahmed. His eyes became red with fury and he

was intently gazing at Ahmed. I was surprised and could not understand why he should show so much enmity towards Ahmed."

Mataji: "Yesterday, Ahmed had given a wash to both the bullocks and had tied them near the well. I happened to pass that way and, seeing the bullocks, remembered that we had promised to give these two bullocks and the cart to Ahmed so that he could look after them and earn his livelihood. I then called Ahmed and advised him that he should take good care of the bullocks. He should not be harsh to them. If he should prosper in life, he must cultivate a kind and charitable nature and so on. When I was saying this, the bullocks, standing though at a distance, had their heads and ears up with eyes wide open and were looking at us without winking. I was surprised to see how soon the bullocks understood what I told Ahmed and how disturbed they were at our very talk of sending them from the ashram. Immediately after that, Govinda was trying to butt Ahmed and did not seem to like the very look of him. This is the case not only with the bullocks. Whenever I go to the goshala and, seeing the congestion there, entertain a thought of selling a few of the bulls, do you know how they react? It is after all a thought, but the very next moment I see them raise their heads and cast a very angry look at me as if to ask me if I alone have the right to live in the ashram and not they.

"On the other hand, whenever I went there and felt that the grass supplied was insufficient, and that I ought to have arranged to get more grass as most of the cows appeared not fully fed, the cows would raise their heads and give me a very gracious look and shake their heads as if to invite me near them. Thus they are affected by our mere thoughts.

"We had given a cow to M. P. When M. P. turned against the ashram, this cow refused to take even water at M. P.'s house. If she came to the ashram she would drink very well.

"Cows are so loving. They are like children. If we start taking interest in them, we shall never be satisfied with what we do for them. I used to spend hours in the goshala. Now, of course, I don't find time to do so."

209. 9-45 p.m. Lying on his bed and turning towards S. Papa asked, True aspirant, "Do you know R. Rao, a lawyer?"
one in a million

S: "I have heard of him. Is he the one who was hit with a cocoanut by Swami Nityananda?"

Papa: "Yes. He was coming to the ashram every year for some years. He came here last about two years ago. It seems he was later saying that there was no more need for his coming here as he had got what he wanted. He started teaching

others and soon found a batch of disciples. He had stopped his practice as lawyer and was spending his time reading *the Bhagavad Gita* and other scriptures to the many devotees who gathered in his house. Do you know what happened? Afterwards he left his house and went to his father-in-law's, where his wife gave birth to a boy. This is the sort of vairagya these people get. He no longer goes to his own place."

Papa (to Mataji) : "Krishnabai, do you remember R. Rao who was coming here?"

There was no reply. She was asleep.

Papa : "She has fallen asleep. Let her sleep. The whole day she had been busy in the fields, standing in the hot sun."

Then she woke up and asked Papa what he was talking about.

Papa : "You had better sleep. You are tired."

Mataji : "No, Papa. What about R. Rao?"

Papa then narrated the story, and when he finished it, she said, "Don't you think that there can be only one in a million who is a true aspirant? Others have one desire or other lurking in their minds."

Papa (to S.) : "What a conceit ! These people imagine and go on telling others that they have attained what they wanted ; and this is the result."

S : "What can be done with this sort of people? Some one started making an image of Lord Ganesa and, when finished, it turned out to be the image of a monkey."

Mataji : "That is exactly what is happening."

October 10, 1953

210. Darker side of ashram life	12 noon. M. R. Ramaswami, Subbaram and S. were going to the dining-hall. A few yards away from the kitchen they saw Mataji near the washing-shed. Seeing them, she took her umbrella and started for the dining-hall. Noticing that she had not had her bath, S. asked, "Mataji, have you not had your bath yet?"
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Mataji : "Today I will eat meal first and then take a bath."

S : "That is fine. But what is the matter today?"

Mataji : "Today those ladies who have come from Trichur are waiting to dine with me. If I go for my bath now, they will be further delayed. I shall just have a wash and come back."

Mataji and the batch of women devotees from Trichur sat in one line. Opposite to them sat Ramaswami, Subbaram, Gopal, S., and others.

After all had nearly finished their meal, Mataji casually enquired about Devi, an old woman, and seeing her, said, "Oh, she has come. Today, for something or other, I have been angry from the morning. On some days it is like that."

S : "What happened today ?"

Mataji : "It started with F. this morning. Then with Devi. She hangs her clothes to dry in the room where she is sleeping, and if the clothes of somebody else are put there, she gets upset and abuses them. This morning some ladies had hung their silk garments in Devi's room, as they should not be hung out in the sun. Devi did not like this and got angry. She had her cotton clothes there which could very well be put out to dry in the sun. She washes her hands outside the bathroom, but if anybody else does so, she quarrels with them. This morning I got angry and told her that I would take her to Papa immediately and report her conduct. I talk much, but put off taking action."

S : "What was wrong with F. ?"

Mataji : "He has not been attending to his work regularly nowadays. It is also reported that he is gambling in a tea-shop. When I asked him if he was gambling, he got annoyed, as he took my question to be a great insult. I too lost my temper and went on talking, rather rebuking him without even listening to what he was saying. I do not remember all that I told him, but I tried to impress on him that if he is working here, he should not be absent without any previous intimation. By such irregularity, work would suffer greatly. New men who are put on the job cannot do the work efficiently. But that does not mean he is indispensable. If he goes away, we can manage somehow, but playing such tricks is no good. So I warned him."

S : "Listening to your talks about the ashram, we sit so long that the hands get dry."

Mataji : "You go on writing articles praising the ashram. What is the use ?"

Ramaswami (*laughing*) : "Still harping on the same string ! Are we not writing also about the darker side of the ashram life ?"

S (*laughing*) : "Yes, Mataji, on whatever topic you start, you must end on this note about the ashram."

Mataji: "What is the use of my talking about it always? That was why, perhaps, the ancient rishis and munis who, in the beginning preached a lot, got fed up with their preaching and finally retired to the quiet mountains. However much you teach or preach, the world remains the same, because none wants to learn. Everybody wants to be a teacher, not a student. Even that boy (*referring to Mohan, Keshav's son*), who is but three years old, wants to teach others and does not want to learn. That is how children are nowadays."

211. S: "Why is the world like that? The mentality of people today is very different from what it was some years back."
Moha—higher and lower

Mataji: "Because it is a world after all. In the world people have Prapancha Moha or worldly attachment. It is moha for the limited family circle. But here we have Paramartha Moha or spiritual attachment. The circle is wider. If in the world people have moha for four persons, we have here moha relating to four thousand, four million, or four crores of people. Still it is moha."

According to Mataji, anything other than the absolute samata of the transcendent vision is moha. Continuing, she said, "Worldly moha is of a lower type, but in our case it is moha of a higher type. In order that we may have this moha of ours broken and we may be free inwardly and outwardly like avadhutas, those very people themselves whom we serve, and to whom we are attached, help to cut the knot. You see here how they are helping to release us from moha and make us free like avadhutas. Now get up. Your hands are dry, go and wash them."

4-30 p.m. Harvesting had started. Mataji was supervising the work almost the whole day. Papa also went there about 4 o'clock and both were sitting in the veranda of the small hut at the southern end of the fields. S. went there with a cine camera to take some pictures. Seeing S. with the camera, Papa thought of Ramkishor. He called the boy Kishor who was with S. and said, "Kishor, go to the ashram, tell Ramkishor that film is being taken here, and ask him to come here soon."

After the films were taken, Papa, Subbaram, S. and the children returned to the ashram, leaving Mataji there to supervise the work. Papa then went and stood for sometime looking at the harvested paddy that was being stacked.

212. **Sadhus must rely on God** A sadhu came and sat in front of Papa. He was in white robes, a long shirt reaching up to his knees, and had a big white 'V' mark with a red line in the centre of his forehead. The white 'V' and the red line had their base almost on the middle of his nose, the other

ends crossing the forehead were touching the head. That mark signified that he was a vaishnavite.

Papa : "Maharaj, what is the matter?"

Sadhu : "Guruji, I am going now to catch the train to Mangalore."

He then prostrated before Papa, got up and stood quiet. Papa then left that place and came to take his seat on the chair put in front of the bhajan-hall. The sadhu too followed him and stood by the side of the cement bench near Papa's chair. Papa thought of giving him two rupees, and asked Subbaram to bring his small bag. When the bag was brought and Papa was about to take out the money, the sadhu said, "Guruji, you must give me some monetary help, at least enough to purchase a ticket to . . ."

Papa : "Maharaj, we have not got enough money to distribute to you all for your tickets and so on. Ramdas thought of giving you something with which you can surely purchase a ticket up to Mangalore. From there you can get hold of some big people and get help from them."

Sadhu : "Guruji, I cannot get help from anywhere. All are misers."

Papa : "Is that so? You have no faith in God then. Sadhus must rely on God for help and move about cheerfully."

Papa then took the money and passed it on to the sadhu.

The sadhu found that it was only two rupees.

Sadhu : "Guruji, please give me sufficient money for my ticket to Rameshwar."

Papa : "Ramdas can give you only this much. You may get more help from Mangalore or any other place."

The post was brought and Papa got busy in reading the many letters that had arrived. The sadhu sat on the cement bench and went on talking something in Gujarati.

Papa (to S.) : "This fellow is a great grumbler."

Sadhu : "Babubhai at Cannanore purchased a ticket for me to come here and told me that I would get all the help from here to go to Rameshwar."

Papa : "Ah, Babubhai would never have told you that. He knows the condition of the ashram. You are telling a lie for the sake of money. What type of sadhu are you? Telling lies for money? Is this sadhuhood?"

Sadhu : "That Bhavnagarwala gave me information about the ashram."

Papa : "See how he changes the topic now."

Sadhu : "A batch of Gujaratis at Cannanore . . ."

Papa : "Do not go on telling this and that to cover your lie. Is it to tell lies that you have taken to this life? Sadhus must freely wander depending upon God. You got help from Cannanore to come here and go from here to Mangalore. You must cheerfully go and see that God is there to help you onwards. You seem to have no faith in Him and instead of remembering Him you think only of *money-god* always."

This was too scathing an attack for the sadhu. He placed the two rupees on the bench and said, "Guruji, I am not a sadhu wandering for money. I am for God and I go about with the name of God. When you accuse me of having told a lie, I do not want to take even this money. You can have it back."

Papa (*stretching both hands*) : "Maharaj, Ramdas will gladly receive it from you. You are a great sadhu, but Ramdas is only a bhikshu. He does not mind begging from you. Maharaj, please give that back to Ramdas."

The sadhu realised that he was losing the game and wanted to play a different part. He changed his grumbling attitude and, putting on a smiling face, said, "Guruji, what do you say? You are a great mahatma. You have everything with you. You are the king of kings."

Papa : "Nothing like that. He is only a beggar."

The sadhu feared he would lose even the two rupees. He quickly took the money, put his bags on his shoulder and was about to leave.

Papa : "Don't think of money. Take God's name always."

Sadhu : "I am a Gujarati sadhu and I am always singing bhajan."

Papa : "You are now singing only of money."

Sadhu : "With your grace, I will do bhajan."

Papa : "Yes, that will do you good!"

He left.

213. **Ashram different from what was envisaged** Around 7 p.m. Mataji saw S. passing by. She called him and said, "I wanted to tell you something, but now I do not remember." She then thought for a while, and recollecting, said, "Yes, it is about the ashram. You all laugh when I talk about the ashram. I do not mean that the ashram should not have been started. I mean only that it should not have taken the present shape. What we wanted it to be was much different from what it has now become."

S : "Is it like the case of the one who started making an image of Ganesa?"

Mataji : "Ah ! Yes, it is like that."

So saying, Mataji proceeded towards the ashram, when S. told her, "You are going away. But you said you had to tell me something."

Mataji : "There is a saying in Konkani which means, 'If you find the dog, the stick is not seen. When the stick is there, the dog is gone.' So, when I feel like talking to you, you are not to be seen. When you are near me, I forget things."

S : "Why not talk now?"

Mataji : "Now I must go to the kitchen to arrange the things that have come from the bazaar today."

10-30 p.m. Mataji was spreading her bed in Papa's room. Gopal had just lighted some agarbattis and was about to leave the room.

Papa (*to Mataji*) : "What is the day tomorrow?"

Mataji : "Tomorrow is Sunday."

Papa : "Hoo Ram's will be done!"

Mataji : "What is the matter, Papa ? When I said, 'Tomorrow is Sunday,' you said, 'Ram's will be done!'"

Papa : "Nothing."

Gopal, hearing the conversation, said, "Because, there will be no money orders coming by post, Sunday being a postal holiday."

The joke from Gopal roused Papa so much that he sat up and laughed loud for a while. He could not control his laughter. Mataji too laughed aloud. Gopal did not laugh, but quietly left the room.

XXV

Anandashram, October 11, 1953

214. **Papa in joyous company** 3 p.m. A taxi brought Natverlal G. Parikh and his wife, Chandrakalaben, from Bombay. They had not given prior intimation of their coming. When they got down from the car, Papa happened to be standing outside the ashram, facing the garden. When the taxi stopped, he turned to see who the visitors were. Natverlal and his wife were coming up the steps, when Papa also walked towards them and greeted them. As the weather was warm, Papa had removed his shirt and had only a thin white cloth on.

Papa : "Ramdas is like a Jain sadhu now !"

He then took them to his room.

About fifteen minutes later, Papa took the guests to the dining-hall for tea. They took their seats and Papa also sat by their side. S. entered the hall and greeted the guests, and after the formal conversation with them for a few minutes, he took his seat before them.

Papa : "Now S. will have tea and keep you company. Ramdas must go. After tea, all of you may come to Ramdas's room and from there we shall go to the fields to meet Mataji."

Papa left the hall. A few minutes later all met again in front of the ashram. Papa was ready with his walking-stick to go to the fields.

Natverlal and his wife were deeply devoted to Papa and Mataji. Papa and Mataji had stayed with them when they were in Bombay. Natverlal was ill for some time and had gone to Europe with his wife for a change and had returned two months back. So he had a lot of news to tell Papa about his experiences in Europe.

Natverlal : "Papa, we remembered you all so much in Switzerland and other places. We had a very comfortable tour all through. I wanted to contact some spiritual institutions. There was one in Switzerland called Moral Rearmament Association (M. R. A.). I took it to be a purely spiritual organization, but later on

came to know that they were mixing up politics with religion. I attended some of their meetings. But one thing appealed to me. They were insisting on everybody leading a strictly moral life and maintaining absolute purity, honesty, unselfishness and love (four absolutes)."

Papa : "Did you meet any of our ashram friends?"

Natverlal : "I had taken a few addresses from Bansidhar Bhai."

S : "Did you meet Mr. Henry Hamblin?"

Natverlal : "I had an appointment to meet him, but due to illness I could not go. The first one I called on was Dr. H. P. Sastri in London. I phoned to him and said that as I knew he was a devotee of Swami Ramdas I would like to meet him."

Papa : "What did you say? He, a devotee of Ramdas! What? This is what you people do. If you had met Hamblin also you would have said the same thing. What will those people think? They may take it that Ramdas is claiming that they are all Ramdas's devotees."

Natverlal : "H. P. Sastri replied, 'I am a devotee of God.' He invited us later to spend some time with him, which we did one evening."

From a distance Mataji was seen sitting on a small wooden stool in the fields.

Papa : "Mataji does not know yet that you have come. Ramdas told her two or three days back that both of you might suddenly come here and take us by surprise."

Natverlal : "Even this morning we were not sure of coming here. We had not made reservations. We went to the airport to take our chance and luckily two seats were vacant."

Papa : "Sitting here, Ramdas can feel the pulse of you all. He knew your thoughts and so your coming is not a surprise to him. Nowadays he is able to read others' thoughts easily. If there is anybody by his side entertaining some bad thoughts, Ramdas knows it immediately; but very often he does not speak out as the other person will deny it and will fight it out to establish that he never had such thoughts. So Ramdas feels it safer to keep quiet about it."

The party reached the spot where Mataji was standing. Natverlal and his wife prostrated before Mataji, who inquired after their health and said, "Papa said that you might turn up suddenly. Have you had tea?"

Natverlal : "Yes. Papa himself took us to the dining-hall and gave us tea."

Mataji : "It is very good. So Papa himself looked after you."

Papa : "Ramdas played her (Mataji's) part, that is all."

Mataji asked Papa to sit on the wooden stool on which she had been sitting ; others kept standing and talked of various matters. As it began to rain, Papa started to return. S. and Natverlal followed him. Chandrakalaben stayed behind with Mataji.

October 12, 1953

215. 5 p.m. Papa was strolling in the garden. S. joined him.

**Mataji, a
perfect
planner.**

Papa : "Today it is very cloudy. If it is bright tomorrow, you must take some pictures of the garden. The flowers are coming up very nicely."

Natverlal also joined them.

S (to Natverlal) : "How did you manage to come out ? How is your fever ?"

Papa : "He came out even in the afternoon. He is not quite well yet."

Natverlal : "Papa, this is a fine and well laid-out garden. Whose design was it ?"

Papa : "Ramdas drew the design and Francis worked it out. He has done it exactly as Ramdas wanted."

Four big plants were planted anew and there was a bamboo piece projecting from the ground near each of those plants.

S : "Papa, what are those bamboo pieces for ?"

Papa : "That is Mataji's idea for watering the plants. Water poured through these bamboos will directly go to their roots. Otherwise only the earth on the top will be wet. Look at Mataji's originality. She has a wonderful brain. See this new room."

Natverlal : "It looks very fine."

Papa : "It is all Mataji's plan. She is an expert in planning. But one thing, she cannot tolerate anybody interfering with her plan. She must be left to do things as she likes. Ramdas used to interfere, but later realised that it would have been better if she had been left alone. So, he has now given her a free hand, and she does everything perfectly."

Natverlal : "If Mataji hears this, what would she say ?"

Papa : "Now she agrees to what Ramdas says. But she sometimes says that Ramdas is still interfering. Mostly he does not interfere. Even when we receive money, Ramdas simply hands the whole thing to her and does things as she directs. If somebody has to be paid, she gives the money to Ramdas and he pays him like a secretary. That is a good job.

"When letters addressed to her are received, he replies to them and sends blessings on her behalf. So he is truly her secretary."

Natverlal : "Papa can play any part."

Papa : "Oh, yes. He can play the part of the dust of anybody's feet too !"

October 14, 1953

216 1 p.m. Natverlal and S. went to the dining-hall but Mataji was not
Be eager for there. So they waited outside for Mataji. When Mataji came it was
God nearly 1-30. She smiled at both and remarked : "If you wait like this
 for God, you will surely get Him, that is if you do sadhana and
eagerly wait for Him without thinking of anything else till He comes."

Natverlal : "So, should we not take food till we get God?"

Mataji : "That is not what I mean. You wait for God with all eagerness, with the firm determination that you want nothing till you attain Him."

All sat down for lunch. Natverlal was having a bad stomach-ache ever since he came from Bombay. So he was on diet.

Mataji (*to Natverlal*) : "See. Now you have been forced to live on purely satvic diet. But for your stomach trouble you would not have lived on satvic diet."

S : "Mataji, Papa says that Natverlal has become so satvic that all men, animals and birds have started loving him. They flock around him, with the result that he has not slept for the last two or three nights. Wild cats gave him company for two nights and then some birds and bats kept him awake almost the whole of last night."

Mataji laughed.

Natverlal : "I feel all right now."

Mataji : "Now you are all right. But this trouble came to test your faith and devotion. You came here with the idea of staying for eight days. The stomach trouble has shaken you entirely. If you had wings you would have flown to Bombay two days back."

Natverlal : "I thought of starting on Friday. In fact that will not make any difference as Saturday and Sunday are holidays for my office."

Mataji : "Not your office but your h-o-u-s-e ! ! ! !"

Natverlal : "No, Mataji, I am not anxious about the house. She (*pointing to his wife, Chandrakalaben, sitting near Mataji*) worries about all that."

Mataji : "Do not deny that. The mind plays all sorts of tricks. Deep within, it may be entertaining some anxious thoughts about the house. On the surface you say that you are not anxious. This is dangerous. Now you are able to suppress it, but a day may come when the mind gets strong with such thoughts and throws you overboard. To avoid that, the best course is to see honestly if the mind has really any desire to be clinging on to house and family. If so, advise it nicely about the pros and cons of it, and it is sure to be freed of that desire. Suppressing or hiding is not good. Samarth Ramdas had a fine way of tackling the mind. He used to advise the mind as he would advise children, and place before it the serious consequences that might ensue if it chose to follow a wrong path."

October 15, 1953

217. 9-15 p.m. In front of Papa were sitting a number of devotees in **Saints speak** the bhajan-hall. Papa talked on various subjects. Then a brief **from different** interval of silence reigned. Breaking it, Papa started talking. **levels of**

consciousness Papa : "There are different levels of consciousness. That is the reason why saints have expressed the Truth in many ways. Some say Truth is dual, and assert that every other statement about Truth is wrong. Some other saints say it is one and consider the play of duality false. Both seem to be right from their own standpoints."

M. R. Ramaswami : "Which is the higher level ?"

Papa : "There is no higher and lower there. Both are high. One who says that God is the one, nameless, formless Truth is right. The other who says He is the manifold forms is also right. But when one says that he alone is right and all others are wrong, then he is not correct because he does not know that he is talking about only one aspect of the Truth."

S : "When Papa says that the advaitin is right and so also the dvaitin, from what plane or level is Papa viewing them ?"

Papa : "That is no level at all. That is something where the duality and non-duality co-exist, where everything is and everything is not. Having attained this state one is not able to say or explain what one has experienced."

S : "Is it not then the highest level ?"

Papa : "It is no level at all. You can say it is the highest. The best way to express this state is to be silent. No amount of words can express this state. It is a mystery. Madhvacharya and Ramanujacharya were preaching from different planes or levels and that is why they appear to differ in their views."

October 17, 1953

218. A will was made by Papa some years earlier and deposited in the District Registrar's office at Mangalore. Many changes had since taken place in the ashram affairs, and some of those who had been appointed as trustees were no more. It was therefore thought necessary that Papa should execute another will, cancelling the previous one. Arrangements in that connection, such as the valuation of the landed and other immovable properties as well as of the movable properties, publications, etc., were completed a few days back, and the necessary changes were also made in the body of the will with regard to the Sri Krishna Vidyalaya which was previously run by the ashram but had subsequently been handed over to the Harijan Welfare Department. A final draft of the will was ready. In the morning M. R. Ramaswami read in the papers about the Estates Act passed by the Government of Madras recently. He doubted if the new Act would affect the ashram properties and suggested that it would be better to consult some lawyers before the will was finally registered, to avoid any complication that might arise on account of this Act. When Ramaswami was reading out to S. from the newspaper about the passing of the Act, Papa entered their room and enquired what the matter was.

Ramaswami briefly explained the Act and thought it advisable to consult a lawyer before registering the will. Papa was anxious to have the will registered before he started on tour on 1st November. He was trying to hurry up things as much as possible. But delay became unavoidable. Papa agreed to Ramaswami's suggestion and asked him to make arrangements to get a lawyer from Hosdrug the next day.

Papa then left, followed by S. and went straight to his room.

S : "We cannot ask the lawyer to come tomorrow as Balaji (ashram manager) will not be here. He is leaving for Cannanore and will be back only after three or four days."

Papa : "Balaji must be there when the talk goes on. So, there is no use sending for the lawyer now. We thought of registering the will before we started on the tour, but there are unavoidable delays springing forth and it is clear we cannot complete it before 1st November. His will be done ! Why should we make a will at all ? Why should we not let things go ? We are trying to avoid any frictions and complications arising after our passing away. We hope that by making a will things will go on smoothly. But even with all these, the so-called complications will always be there and if there is nothing, those in management will create some complication and thereby bring about friction. So, will or no will, there is trouble. So let things go without a will."

S : "Then God's *will* will work. Of course, even when a will is made, it is also God's will. So in either case God's will alone works."

Papa : "Always it is God's will alone that works. In fact there are no two wills such as human will and divine will. Whatever happens is ordained by the divine. A robber robs because the divine wills it. A murderer murders because the divine wills it. A man does something good because the divine wills it so. In all these cases, though we may immediately attribute it to individual or human will, the fact is that behind all these is the divine."

S : "So viewed, is Papa surprised at anything that happens in the world ?"

Papa : "Yes. Ramdas is really surprised at His play."

S : "What, Papa ? I did not hear you well."

Papa : "At His p-l-a-y. When He comes out with new, and newer things never seen or heard of before, Ramdas is greatly surprised. Sometimes He does the most unimaginable things. How can one not be surprised then ? He plays the part of a pious man. Suddenly He turns into a hypocrite and does such vile things while still in the garb of a pious man that people abhor him. He can play the part of a first-class hypocrite. Who will not be surprised at it ?"

219.
**Never tell a
lie**

9-30 p.m. As Natverlal and his wife were leaving the next day they remained with Papa longer than usual. After talking for some time in the bhajan-hall, Papa came to his room, where his bed was being spread. They too came in. When the bed was ready, Papa sat on it.

Natverlal : "Papa, how are we to tackle our motor car affair? Lawyers are advising us each in a different way. What does Papa advise us?"

Papa : "As our Ramaswami put it just now, law is an ass. Government is making people tell lies, bringing such laws into force that people cannot live without defying them. What can Ramdas advise you? He does not know the ways of the world with all its intrigues. Ramdas has been advising all to lead an honest and straightforward life. But how many take his advice? They say it is impossible to live in the world without resorting to falsehood and foul means." (to S.) : "Do we in the ashram lead a really honest life? Are we straightforward in all our transactions? What do you think?"

S : "We may be breaking certain laws boldly, but do not resort to telling lies. If we ask Mataji, we can see that she looks at this subject from an entirely different angle. Once I asked her if, to save herself or to save others from some critical situations, she would tell a lie. She replied that she would not tell a lie to save herself from any situation, but in the case of helping others she was not sure what she would do. She might or might not tell a lie."

Papa : "Her view in such matters is entirely different from Ramdas's. Ramdas would never tell a lie under any circumstance, even for saving others from difficulties. Whatever Mataji does is only to help others and her heart is so pure that her acts are always for the benefit of others. Whatever she does, she does very boldly. During the days of strict rationing, supply of rice was not sufficient for feeding as she wanted. The ration shop was in the same building as our dye-house opposite the ashram. She used to go there once a week and ask the storekeeper to give her some rice or wheat, accounting the same against the ration-card holders who had not drawn their rations. Ramdas would never have done such a thing. Her argument was that there were so many being fed in the ashram and rice or wheat was badly needed, and there was no harm in getting those rations which were not required by the card-holders.

"One day, when she was about to return from the ration shop with a good quantity of rice and wheat, the rationing inspector came there and questioned the storekeeper how he issued the rice and wheat to Mataji. The inspector was not satisfied with the explanation that the clerk gave, and held on to the view that it was an offence. Then Mataji talked to him explaining the situation. She said, 'The storekeeper has given us some rice and wheat which were not purchased by some card-holders. This is for use in the ashram, where a large number of people of all classes are being fed every day. In the ashram we are not working for any selfish ends. Whatever we do is for the public good. You people here should volunteer to help the ashram as much as possible. Instead, you are trying to stop us from taking some extra rice. Is this for me to eat? Come and find out who are all eating?'

This explanation satisfied the inspector who now, with folded hands, told Mataji : 'You may take whatever surplus there is of rice or wheat here'.

Natverlal : "So, instead of Mataji becoming the accused, the inspector became the accused."

Papa : "Yes. Look at the beauty of it !"

Natverlal : "But, what about sadhakas ? I feel they should never tell a lie on any account."

Papa : "Yes. Sadhakas should never tell lies for their own sake."

S : "Does Papa then permit them to tell lies for the sake of others ?"

Papa : "No. They must be absolutely honest. Ramdas does not think there can be spiritual progress for anyone who is given to telling lies."

XXVI

Anandashram, October 18, 1953

220. Natverlal and his wife left this morning at 8 o'clock. They had brought a clock for Papa, purchased by them in Switzerland. The peculiarity of the clock was that whenever it had to strike the hour and the half-hour, a small door opened above the dial, a tiny bird peeped out and made a 'coo-coo' sound as many times as needed to denote the time and went inside closing the door. The bird looked so natural and realistic that it had become a centre of great attraction for young and old alike. Every time the bird came out Papa watched it, seeming to enjoy it as if he saw the clock for the first time. It had been adorning the wall in Papa's room for over a week but still its novelty had not worn off.

**The Cuckoo
Clock—
Definite
purpose
behind
mistakes**

Papa, S. and Iqbal Nath who had come from Bangalore during his holidays, were in the room. It was nearing eleven o'clock. Mirabai (Mrs. T. Mukund Rao), who was away for the past ten days, returned that morning and came to meet Papa.

Papa: "You have not seen this new clock. Have you?"

Mirabai: "No, Papa."

Papa: "In five minutes you will see that small door will open and a little bird will come out and make a 'coo-coo' sound eleven times. It is a great fun, watch it."

She waited to see the mysterious bird, and Papa also was gazing at the clock. It was eleven. The bird came out and, after cooing eleven times, went in, closing the door.

Papa (*while it was cooing on the stroke of eleven*): "Ah, look at that!" (*laughs*). (*to S.*): "This clock may not work satisfactorily for a long time."

S: "It may not. These are after all fancy things. See the watch given to Papa by Bhai Pratap. It looks nice and must have cost a lot, but does not work properly."

Papa: "Oh, Ramdas forgot to send that watch to Bhai Pratap through Natverlal. He could have got it repaired before we reached Bombay. Ramdas made a mistake. (*Again after a few seconds*) It cannot be a mistake. There must be some meaning in Ramdas's forgetting to send it through Natverlal. Even the minutest actions are controlled by the Supreme Power. Every so-called mistake or slip must have a definite purpose behind it. Then how can we call it a mistake or a slip?"

S: "Why is it then that Papa sometimes says he made a mistake?"

Papa (*laughing a while*): "These words are in the vocabulary. So Ramdas must use them as there are no other suitable words to explain things."

S: "So, Papa gives only so much value to these words."

Papa: "Through these expressions we must go deeper into the real meaning."

Mataji: "Papa, bath is ready. Please come."

It was already late. So Papa hurried up to the bath-room.

221. 1 p.m. Mataji had sat down for meal in the dining-hall. On either side were the children who had come from the Mangalore Sevasram to spend their Dassera holidays here, and also daughters of Mukund Pai. All these girls were very anxious to sit beside Mataji as long as they were in the ashram. Devi, an old woman, came for meal and found that on Mataji's right there was a girl sitting but there was a little space between that girl and the wall. Devi wanted to squeeze herself into that space in order to sit near Mataji.

Though Mataji knew Devi's wish, she asked her to sit elsewhere. But Devi insisted on occupying that very place. At this, Mataji wanted to give her a bit of her mind.

Mataji: "Devi, you sit somewhere else. Why are you particular about sitting there? Oh, you want to sit near me? Don't you? You do not want to obey me. What do you gain then by sitting near me? You gain nothing but more of anger. I do not want you to sit here. Go and sit somewhere else."

Devi quietly occupied a place away from Mataji.

Mataji (*to S., M. R. R., and others*): "She is quite a character. She wants to sit by my side, but never listens to a single word of mine. The hubbub she creates when anybody asks her for a garland is something to be ashamed of. She plucks flowers and tulsī leaves and makes garlands daily. She is particular that she alone

should garland Papa. Even if asked, she will not give a garland to anybody else. When anybody asks, she becomes so furious that she replies, 'Garland! Go, go. Pluck flowers and make a garland. I cannot give you.' Is this the mentality they should develop, staying with me, taking prasad and so on? The prasad only increases their bad temper and selfishness."

S: "Unless they improve in your company and by your contact, where is salvation for them? Do you mean to say satsang has no value at all?"

Mataji: "But you must have the mind to improve. Otherwise, what is the use of our contact? You must be prepared to receive and we must be prepared to give. When we are prepared to give and you do not want it, what is the use? So one must have the ardent wish to improve. Then only one derives the benefit of satsang. Devotees who came here only for a short stay appear to progress better than those who stay with us always.

"I told you all this because I was upset from the morning itself."

222.

S: "What happened in the morning?"

**Jealousy
hinders
progress**

Mataji: "Generally when I give anything to others by way of help, I forget all about it later. Sometimes I do not even know how much money I give them. I give them whatever I have without counting. Not that I always do so, but mostly so. I never talk about my charities to anybody, as far as possible even if I am aware how much I have given. I was wondering to myself when I started narrating this morning in detail all that I gave to a person, say X. No, I had better tell you more clearly. You saw the woman with her daughter who went this morning with Natverlal's party in the same car. Her condition is pitiable because of her extreme poverty. She was better off. An aunt or some relation of hers is a very rich woman and whenever she approaches her, she gives her old sarees, and some other help. So they are seen wearing costly sarees. Closely observed, one could see how old they are—full of holes. This woman has a number of children and she narrated to me all her troubles, and I did give her some money when she left. I was talking about this to Radha and others while cutting vegetables. Then Radha tells me that they do not seem to be poor; it is all a show outside to cheat me and take money from me; just like them, many people come and cheat me, and so on. From this I understood the mentality of the people around me. If that woman came to me under a false pretence of poverty, can I not say Radha also might be doing the same thing when she narrates about her difficulties? These people cannot tolerate my giving anything to others. Are they not themselves getting all benefits from us? So why should they grumble when some others get just a fraction of what they get? They themselves do not give. But why should they feel

jealous when I give to others? Is this the progress they make by our contact? I had thought one might progress well if one was with us from childhood itself. But after seeing how Ramkishor is behaving, that illusion is also gone."

October 19, 1953

223. 1 p.m. At lunch, Subbaram asked Mataji, "When I meet some people I feel a spontaneous love for them, speak to them, and do all sorts of service to them. In the case of certain other people, I do not even like to speak to them. Why is it so?"

Don't give importance to petty matters

Mataji: "Let it be so. You may sometimes feel like speaking to some and not to others. Sometimes you may like doing something but some other time not. You think of eating something, but suddenly refrain from eating. So, do not give any importance to such petty matters."

October 20, 1953

224. 9-30 p.m. Gopal had made Papa's bed. Papa was about to go to bed. Iqbal, Subbaram, and S. were with him. Papa sat on his cot and asked Iqbal: "How is that Frenchman, Jean Bergerot? Has he any interest in religion?" (Iqbal had known him in Bangalore).

No outward mark for a jivanmukta

Iqbal: "He has read a lot of books on Indian philosophy. I think he is spiritually minded too."

S: "Did he not talk to Papa at all?"

Papa: "He talked once, immediately after his arrival, not after that."

Iqbal: "I asked him to tell me his impressions about Papa."

Papa: "M. R. Ramaswami also wanted the same thing, and has asked him to write it out for *The Vision*."

Iqbal: "When I asked him, he said that he did not consider Papa a jivanmukta. I was surprised, and asked him what made him think so. He said he found Papa easily disturbed when the children were making noise. He admits Papa is a holy person and so on, but not a jivanmukta yet."

Papa: "Everybody forms his own opinion of Ramdas. They are quite at liberty to do so. Ramdas does ask the children to go away from here when they make noise. We cannot talk when they shout."

Iqbal : "But I would be very sorry if he goes back with this impression. When he got such a unique privilege to come here and be with Papa, it is indeed a sad affair to return with such an impression. I told him that his judgment was wrong and that it is a pity these trifling things should create in him such an impression."

Papa : "What can we do? We can't force things on them when they do not want them. It seems somebody criticised Sri Ramakrishna saying that he was not a spiritually advanced person, but only an ordinary man. Sri Ramakrishna then answered him that a God-realised man does not develop two horns on his head. You cannot find any outward mark for a jivanmukta. And further, Ramdas does not pose to be a jivanmukta. Is posing necessary? Perhaps those who pose are passed off as jivanmuktas. When we are talking and the children make noise here, how can we allow them to have their own way? If Ramdas does not ask them to keep quiet, the critic may ask why Ramdas is tolerating the boys' shouting. In Ramanashram, Maharshi remained unconcerned with all such things. Devotees asked why he was not even advising the children to keep quiet. So, either way the critic has something to say. After all, a jivanmukta is not a mere statue."

October 23, 1953

225. 4-30 p.m. Papa, followed by Jean Bergerot, Balayogi, Subbaram
Use of Ganja and S. went for a walk. From outside the gate they could see
ruinous Swami Krishnananda coming from the Udyog Shala. Swami
Krishnananda had come a few days back from Guruvayur where
he intends settling down for intense sadhana. In a few minutes he also joined Papa
and party.

S : "Swamiji, are they photos that you have in the packet in your hand?"

Swami Krishnananda : "I got Papa's and Mother's photos to take to Guruvayur." (to Papa) : "With Papa's grace alone I can succeed in my five-year plan of sadhana."

Papa : "Is it like the Soviet five-year plan?"

Swami Krishnananda : "This is a plan of intense sadhana. I will keep these two photos there on a raised pedestal, agarbattis will be burning, a few books also will be on the pedestal, and I will sit on an asan facing the photographs."

Papa : "Why all these external paraphernalia?"

Swami Krishnananda : "Really I do not need these external aids for the type of japa I do. I take my mind only within. But I am having these external things to

keep people away from me. When they come and see me sitting in front of the pictures and all other things they will know that I am sitting for pooja and therefore will quietly go away whereas if they see me sitting alone without these external articles of worship, there is every likelihood of their dragging me into talks and so on."

Papa: "So you are going to keep Ramdas and Mataji there as scarecrows!"
(a peal of laughter).

The group then walked about a mile on the road towards the east. It was about sadhus and the use of ganja that Papa talked all the way. He said, "There are many sadhus who are addicted to ganja. When Ramdas was wandering with them, they used to force him also to smoke ganja, and Ramdas did use it a few times. They say it helps meditation. But the greatest danger is that they find it impossible to live without it later."

S: "In what way does it help meditation?"

Papa: "It can make one forget all about the world."

S: "That does not mean the mind will be on God. Even concentration will be impossible then."

Papa: "Though the mind will be away from worldly thoughts, it will not be fixed anywhere. It won't give a positive joy. It will be only the absence of worldly cares, a purely negative state."

Swami Krishnananda: "Then how can one say it helps meditation?"

Papa: "By forgetting the world one becomes free from those worries and the state of absence of worries is mistaken to be a high plane. But this ganja, in course of time, ruins a man."

S: "What is the difference between the intoxication caused by liquor and that by ganja?"

Papa: "That caused by liquor is something bestial, whereas that caused by ganja does not give rise to low thoughts."

226. Then the party turned round and, as it was likely to rain, all
The simplest walked fast to reach the ashram early. Papa sat on the asan, and
Sadhana— Swami Krishnananda and S. in front of him on the floor.
Advantage of

Service

Papa: "Ramnam is the thing that you must keep up all the time without break. This is the best and simplest sadhana. Can you

remain in the world and be dead to it? Can you talk, act and move about and yet be dead to the world?"

Swami K. : "What does Papa mean by 'being dead to the world'?"

Papa : "Absolutely detached, unconcerned. Whatever may happen in front of you, you are not affected. You do things like an automaton, because you are worked by the higher power."

Swami K. : "Papa, we can remain detached everywhere, except when we see suffering."

Papa : "Which part of your being is affected by the suffering? It will be a part that belongs to the manifestation. Your true being is different from the manifestation and so how can your real being be affected? You are a pure witness."

Swami K. : "When we give whatever possible help to relieve the suffering, then we feel happy."

Papa : "Again, watch which part of the being feels happy. You will find that it is only the manifested part. All the movements, all the feelings of sorrow and happiness, and the sufferings, and the relief from suffering—all these belong to the plane of manifestation. Of course, when someone is suffering, we can help him. Our heart melts and we come down to the level of the sufferer and feel completely one with him. Sometimes we may weep with the sufferer, though not always outwardly, and when we feel one with him he is, to a great extent, relieved of the suffering. This purifies us too. This is the advantage of service. We feel one with the served. When we serve saints, we lose ourselves in the service, forget our ego-sense and feel one with them. This will take us up quickly. In either service we attain to a high state of purity and our ego-sense gradually disappears—by humbling ourselves while serving the distressed, and by raising ourselves to their level while serving saints."

Papa continued : "How can we sympathise with those who suffer? It is possible only when we have got a pure heart. How can we have a pure heart? Only when it becomes God's own heart. Ask those people who are hanging around, if they can feel for the sufferings of others. They weep when their kith and kin suffer, but not for others. Here the sense of my-ness is obstructing them. What an amount of mischief the ego-sense does? After all it is only a *sense* and not anything that exists. Saints, who have once for all shed their ego-sense, wonder how a thing that has no existence at all becomes the cause of so much misery to man. When we shed the ego-sense, how sweet everything is!"

Swami K. : "What is the nature of that sweetness?"

Papa: "It is pure bliss—unadulterated bliss permeating each and every cell of our body. Later we realise that the same bliss is pervading everywhere. We swim in an ocean of bliss."

October 24, 1953

227. Recently it was found that there was a higher percentage of sugar in Papa's urine. Since then he had been adjusting his diet very strictly, and taking regular evening walks. The diet and the walks had done him good and reduced the sugar in urine. In the morning, when the urine was tested, the sugar was reported to be nearly normal. Mataji was happy to hear that.

Papa (to Mataji): "Did you hear the urine-test result? And do you know what Ramdas ate yesterday? He took dosai (made of rice) and jaggery with it. Still the sugar in the urine is much less."

Mataji (laughing): "It would be better to take dosai daily so that sugar may be less. The dosais were brought with intense love by Radha (Kogganna's wife), and that has worked the miracle. You ought to have seen Radha when she brought it for you. I met her on the way. As I had nothing to take along with my tea, when I saw her carrying dosai for Papa last evening, I told her that Papa might not take it but that I might be given one or two by her. You see, she wouldn't give me. She said Papa should eat first and that he *would* eat. Then in a short time she brought me hot, hot dosais. Things given with such love will not cause any harm to the body."

In the forenoon Mataji told Papa that Radha would bring for him iddli and khir. Papa took them with the noon meal. The afternoon urine was again nearly clear.

Papa (to S.): "Today the urine is very clear. Ramdas's evening walk is responsible for this."

S: "But Mataji attributes it to Radha's dosai, iddli and khir served to Papa with great love."

Papa: "Let Mataji and others think like that and go on giving Ramdas sweet and delicious preparations. In the meantime we must keep up our walk. If we give up walking, the whole fun is gone."

October 25, 1953

228. 10-15 a.m. Papa was waiting in the room for the usual massage before bath. S. prepared Papa's bed for massage. Swami Krishnanda was also in the room, fanning Papa.

Papa's
diabetes

S: "Papa, shall we start our massage business?"

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas is ready."

Then Swami K. was about to leave the room, but Papa asked him to stay on.

Papa (to S.): "During massage last night Ramdas had a talk with Ram."

S: "About what, Papa?"

Papa: "About Ramdas's diabetes."

S: "What did He say?"

Papa: "He says, if Ramdas does not control his diet he will become another Ambakka."

Ambakka was an old mother in the ashram suffering from severe diabetes and had a carbuncle on her back. The carbuncle did not heal. If one healed, another one cropped up.

S: "That is horrible. One should not be like Ambakka. Is He not going to cure Papa's diabetes?"

Papa: "That is not Ramdas's concern. His will be done!"

S: "How long is He going to keep Papa under strict diet?"

Papa: "He says Ramdas has been eating sweets all these sixty-five years and he should not crave for them any longer."

S: "But, at least to satisfy the devotees who are anxious to feed Papa with various sweets, Ram should free Papa from diabetes."

Papa: "Do you know what He says? If Ramdas is carried away by the so-called love of the devotees, he will have to suffer."

S: "Is it only so-called love?"

Papa: "Yes. There is no proper understanding behind it. That is all misplaced love. Ram says, 'They will make you eat anything and everything and hasten your body's departure. The devotees themselves are responsible for your diabetes.' So, Ramdas has to be careful and adjust his diet. His evening walks also will help. He should not be lazy to take the walk. If Ram wills that this body should last long, He will make Ramdas give up his laziness for the evening walk."

229. 9-30 p.m. Papa was lying down. Mataji was sitting on one side
The Only and S. on the other for massaging him.
Solution for
all Problems Papa (to S.) : "We call Him all-compassionate, all-merciful and

so on. What is the meaning of all these ? He sometimes keeps His devotees weeping and wailing all their life until death. He does not come to them. Is it mercy ? Ramdas has seen cases where some devotees had been burning with intense longing for Him all their lives. But He did not come. What do you say about this ? What is the solution ?"

S : "Why is He doing so ? Can we call Him cruel, then ?"

Papa : "We cannot say these devotees are not sincere in their sadhana. If they are not sincere, they may not be able to continue for such a long time ; they would do their sadhana for a couple of hours and then give it up. That is not the case. They struggle for years and die without attaining anything."

S : "Can we say they die without attaining anything ?"

Papa : "They may succeed in their next life. But that is not what is wanted by them. Why does He not come to them in this life itself ?"

S : "What prevents Him ?"

Papa : "Whatever prevents Him is also caused by Him, is it not ? Why 'caused by Him,' it is He Himself."

S : "Then the seeker is also He ; who prevents is also He ; the sought is also He."

Papa : "That is the thing. When everything is He, who is seeking and who is sought ? He Himself is weeping and wailing to attain Himself, and also putting some obstructions on His own way. He laughs at us and says, 'On whom am I to shower mercy when I am everything ? The whole thing is my own game. Everything is "I". How foolish are you to think that I am mercilessly keeping the aspirant waiting and so forth.' But Ramdas tells Him, 'You alone are accusing yourself that you are not merciful to some of the aspirants'." (*Papa laughs*).

S : "I thought the game was complete before Papa said the last sentence. Papa took a step further to complete His game so nicely."

Papa : "That is the only solution for all problems."

XXVII

Anandashram, October 27, 1953

230. A parcel was received the previous day containing a reel of cinema
The secret of film taken on the occasion of the opening of Ramdas Ashram at
Papa's story- Bhavnagar. The opening ceremony was performed by Papa. The
telling film was sent by Anantrai Kamdar, son of Gunvantrai Kamdar.

8-30 p.m. Papa got busy with the projector and started showing the films to a number of ashramites and visitors gathered in the bhajan-hall, Papa himself operating. The show went off all right though the projector gave a bit of trouble at the end, which Papa set right soon. After the whole show was over and after rewinding the films, Papa said, "This old horse (*looking at the projector*) has run all right." Patting the projector, he said, "Thank you, thank you."

In a few minutes Papa was in bed, and S. was massaging his back.

Papa : "It is not good to go on tours leaving all the ashramites behind."

S : "What else are we to do?"

Papa : "Nothing. Ram's will be done ! Now we have a very peaceful time in the ashram. But while on tour, we shall have so many programmes and we will be busy knocking about the whole day from one engagement to another."

S : "What a contrast between this peaceful life here and the life on tour, so full of hectic activity !"

Papa : "There is a lot of fun and joy there too."

S : "So it is all right. We can spend six months here and six months on tour."

Papa : "Ramdas is wanted everywhere. He has become a slightly big fellow, hasn't he ? He can see it from the film we saw now."

S : "Papa knew that only after seeing the film !"

Papa : "Ramdas could see it clearly in the film."

S : "During sadhana days, or even earlier, did Papa have any inkling of such a life ?"

Papa : "No, never. During sadhana days or earlier he never thought of such a life. He did not wish for or desire anything."

S : "Papa must have had some wish about how his life should be moulded."

Papa : "He wished to attain the supreme peace within and the vision of God everywhere."

S : "Did he not think of the external at all ?"

Papa : "Yes, he wanted to have His vision everywhere."

S : "I mean Papa's external life."

Papa : "No, no thought of that. He never believed in guiding or teaching people. Even now he does not believe in it. He is not a lecturer and he cannot pose to be one. Is he posing or pretending to be a lecturer ? Perhaps he might be doing so."

S : "Even if there is pretension, who is actually at it ?"

Papa : "Ram does it. He is the best pretender. Ramdas does not think that he can guide people by lecturing to them. Sometimes he is forced to talk. But he is sure that if he cracks a joke and they are made to laugh, they will be more benefited than by hearing his lecture for an hour. Ramdas's command of language is not so good. He can tell some stories and make others laugh. Of course, if he had better expression the stories would also have been more interesting."

S : "It is a wonder how Papa gets at these stories to narrate in the proper context."

Papa : "It is not because of Ramdas's cleverness that he is able to tell the stories. Once somebody asked Sri Ramakrishna how he could talk for hours together narrating story after story. It seems he replied that when paddy is being measured, there is one who is actually measuring, one behind him ready to fill the measure, and still another behind him pushing the paddy from the big heap. So he was only like the one who was actually measuring, his supply being reimbursed without break by the Mother behind. So also Ramdas is getting the supplies from the Mother within. She reels off to Ramdas one story after another at the right time."

S : "How did Papa learn all these stories, by reading or hearing ?"

Papa : "Both."

October 30, 1953

231. Papa was having oil massage in his room. Mataji entered the room.
Papa and Mataji, a witty exchange

Mataji : "I am getting them ready. Will you have thin shirt or thick shirt?"

Papa : "Who knows?"

Mataji : "What kind of answer is this? In which school did you learn to answer like this?"

Papa (*laughing*) : "What else can Ramdas say? If he says he wants thick shirt and afterwards it is warm, he will have to change it. If he puts on thin shirt and if it is cool, he will have to change it. Then how can he say what he exactly wants? Ramdas has learnt from experience that he should not commit himself by saying that he wants this or that. The safest thing he has found is to leave it to you."

Mataji : "Will you then have a thin shirt?"

Papa : "Yes, if you think so."

Both laughed and Mataji went to arrange for the bath.

232. 9-30 p.m. Papa was to start on a tour the next day, with Mataji
Getting ready for the tour and S. by the Mail leaving at 10-30 a.m. Mataji was busy arranging, and packing things to be taken for the tour. They were all spread out in the room in the main ashram.

A number of children were running about in the bhajan-hall making a lot of noise and some of the ashramites were talking to Papa.

Mataji : "Papa, unless you go to bed I cannot do any packing work."

Papa : "You may carry on."

Mataji : "Those sitting here and the children playing about will go away only when you go to bed."

Papa : "All right. Then Ramdas is going to bed. You may switch off the lights of the ashram hall."

Papa went to his room and all left one by one for their rooms. Mataji, S. and a couple of others sat inside the room packing.

In about half an hour, Papa was seen standing at the doorway in the room, looking at the packing that was going on.

Mataji : "Why, are you not asleep yet?"

Papa : "Just came to see how you are getting on with packing. Why are you taking so many things? Remember, if you take too many things we will have to pay a huge amount towards air freight. Reduce the items as much as possible."

Mataji : "Papa, I am not taking anything unnecessary. These vessels, you may say, are not required, but in Sholapur they will be necessary, and it will be difficult to manage without them. Anyhow, I shall leave two of these behind."

Papa then went to bed. A little later Motiben came saying that Papa wanted a peppermint.

S : "We have already packed the lozenges-tin inside the hold-all. Should we open it now?"

Mataji (to S.) : "You go and ask Papa if you should open the hold-all and take out that tin."

S (in Papa's room) : "Papa, I am sorry I packed the lozenges-tin in the hold-all."

Papa : "Doesn't matter. Motiben is bringing something else."

Motiben came and gave a piece of sugarcandy, and Papa went to bed again.

S (to Mataji) : "Motiben gave a piece of sugarcandy to Papa."

Mataji : "It has become so common. Whenever we have packed something, Papa asks for it. He has not been taking lozenges for the last so many days. So we thought he would not need it. See, Papa asked for it now."

October 31, 1953

233. Papa had been busy, right from morning, attending to things
'The rock regarding the tour. The party was to leave only at 9-30 a.m. But
is now soft' Papa was ready at 8-30 with a small bag containing his pen, purse, a
 small knife, a diary and sundries.

S : "Papa is ready to start !"

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas is ready with his bag. That is all he carries !"

He then walked towards the asan.

Papa : "Ramdas's legs are tired. He must sit down."

S : "Papa has been on his legs right from morning."

Papa (*to the large number of devotees present in the hall*) : "In the early days of his wanderings he used to go about only with two pieces of cloth and a small bag like this, even smaller than this. Now see, what paraphernalia follow him !"

Then Papa was silent for a few minutes. He appeared to be thinking of something. "Ah", he said.

S : "What is that, Papa ?"

Papa (*smiling*) : "Ramdas feels a bit agitated. Going on tour leaving these people behind moves his heart. Till lately this sort of agitation was not there. Now he feels it, which he should not."

S : "Is it that he should not feel so ?"

Papa : "Some years back he was as hard as a rock, and he was proud of it. Now the rock has become so soft that it melts."

Mataji was passing by the side of Papa, while she was going to the room.

234. Papa (*to Mataji*) : "Now Ramdas feels agitated about leaving these
Devotees people behind and going away. He was not like that before, and
grief-stricken was proud to be as hard as a rock."

at Papa's

departure

Mataji : "That is on account of the breeze that is flowing to you from us. Because of our company you are becoming soft and melting as we are."

At 9 a.m. Papa and others went for meal. By the time Papa returned, the bhajan-hall was full of people, almost all with tears in their eyes. Before Papa left the dining-hall, Balamma, who had been in the ashram for over sixteen years and who would be in charge of the kitchen and sundry affairs in the absence of Mataji, stood before him with folded hands, tears streaming down her cheeks. A few words

came out of her choked throat in the shape of an appeal to Papa : "Papa, do not forget us, do not forget us."

Papa assured her that he would not.

Ramkishor was agitated more than anybody else. He was not showing his feelings, but one could see he was suppressing them. He was sticking to Papa, sitting by his side or walking with him. He went on asking a number of questions, not minding whether others were talking to Papa or not, and Papa had to reply to them. If Papa was speaking to anyone else ignoring his question he would persistently repeat his question till Papa turned to him and gave the answer.

Papa had asked him not to weep or make a show while the party was leaving. So he wanted to control himself. But sometimes he found it difficult to do so. While taking coffee in Papa's room in the morning, he behaved like a rude boy, throwing the plates here and there, and tears came out of his eyes. When Mataji asked him not to weep, he replied that his mother (Motiben) who was sitting in front of him started weeping first, so he also wept. He asked his mother not to weep lest he should follow suit.

When leaving, there was a stir. Those who were controlling themselves till then burst out. Of course, it was nothing compared to the scene when Papa and Mataji were leaving Ashram on a tour in 1949.

Papa had come out and was waiting near the cement seats. The post had just arrived and he was opening the letters in great hurry. The post ought to have come the previous evening, but the mail was late. So a messenger was sent specially in the morning to bring it.

When Papa opened one letter from Ratilal M. Dave, Katrasgarh, he found it contained two cheques, but one cheque was torn to two pieces apparently by him while opening the cover in a hurry.

Papa (to S.): "Oh, Ramdas tore this cheque in his hurry while opening the cover. Will the bank cash it?"

S: "They may cash it, if the two pieces are pasted together."

Papa: "Otherwise you will have to write to Ratilal. He will, of course, send another cheque. But there will be delay, especially when money is wanted here very badly."

Balaji (*who is to be in charge of the ashram*): "I shall send it to the bank properly pasted and they may cash it without difficulty."

Papa handed over the whole correspondence to Balaji with necessary instructions.

The party got into the taxi and left. A few ashramites also followed. Many devotees had gone to the railway station in advance on foot. Besides, a few friends and devotees were already waiting at the railway station. The station master was kind enough to provide two chairs. Papa sat on one, but Mataji kept standing. Ramkishor sat on the other chair. In a few minutes the train arrived and the party (Papa, Mataji, and S.) got into the through Bangalore compartment, already reserved. A group was still on the platform, unhappy at the separation. There was none without tears in his or her eyes. With heavy hearts they looked intently at Papa and Mataji. The train started. Subbaram proposed jai jaikar to Papa and Mataji and the group was warm in its response.

As the train moved Papa could see them only from a distance, waving handkerchiefs. Papa was waving in return.

235. Before the train gained speed, three officers of the railway jumped
Happenings into the compartment. They introduced themselves—one as the guard
in the train and the other two as T. T. I.'s (travelling ticket-checking inspectors).

T. T. I. : "Swamiji, we jumped in, wishing to spend at least a few minutes in the holy atmosphere of your presence. We cannot get it always, so we snatched this opportunity to have a few minutes with you."

Papa : "That is very good. Come on. Sit here. Don't be standing."

T. T. I. : "Swamiji, I read your article in the *Sunday Times*. Even in the latest issue there is an advertisement of your books. I was reading them and here I am with you. Swamiji, it reminds me how you were travelling years ago without tickets and how, when some T. T. I. asked you to get down, you took it to be Ram's will that you should get down there. Now we will not ask you to get down. Our hearts have changed now."

S : "But he does not travel without a ticket nowadays."

T. T. I. : "Even if he goes without a ticket, we will not ask him to get down. Swamiji, are yogasanas necessary for spiritual advancement?"

Papa : "Yogasanas do help. They will not take one to the ultimate goal, but will enable one to keep one's body fit for regular sadhana."

T. T. I. : "For kundalini yoga, are asanas necessary?"

Papa : "Of course, for yoga practices one must keep the body fit. One must be able to sit steady, and practice of asanas is necessary."

Guard : "For meditation, the best is sukhasan. Is it not, Swamiji?"

Papa : "Of course, sukhasan is good and simple."

The train now reached Nileshwar station and they took leave of Papa to attend to their work.

Papa, Mataji and S. were the only occupants in the compartment. At Cannanore, Joshiji and his friends were on the platform. Getting inside the compartment they garlanded Papa and Mataji. Joshiji had brought his daughter also with him. He told Papa that her marriage was fixed to take place at Rajkot on the 9th of December, and as Papa would be at Bhavnagar at that time he asked if Papa would kindly visit Rajkot and bless the couple. With some persuasion, Papa agreed. Then Papa asked Mataji if he should agree to go to Rajkot for the marriage. He also mentioned that there was air service and it would take only half an hour to reach there from Bhavnagar.

Mataji : "As you decide."

So Joshiji was happy.

At Calicut, R. Keshav Rao, S. N. Nath, R. Viswanathan and a number of other devotees came for Papa's darshan with a lot of eatables, milk, coffee and tea. They were extremely happy that they could have Papa's darshan then, as Papa was travelling by train instead of by plane direct to Bangalore as was previously planned. The change was due to uncertain weather conditions.

At Shoranur, a large number of devotees from Trichur had come—V. K. Rama Menon, Devarajan, Swami Krishnananda, Kalakanta Menon, P. V. Subramania Iyer and others.

Vishalakshi, the ashram girl who was married in May last to P. V. Subramania Iyer's son, was very anxious to meet Papa. She had also come with the party. She was overjoyed to meet Papa and Mataji. After garlanding and prostrating before them, she sat by Mataji's side and was laughing like a child. Other devotees had crowded the compartment, prostrating one by one to Papa and giving the various presents and eatables they had brought.

Mataji : "Vishalakshi has improved in her health. She gets love from you all. When she was in the ashram she was getting only scoldings from me." (*Vishalakshi starts sobbing*).

Devarajan's wife was standing in front of Papa. Devarajan, who was standing on the right of Papa, knelt down and, with folded hands and eyes full of tears, prayed: "Papa, I am prostrating before this mother (his wife). Give me strength to observe perfect brahmacharya." He then prostrated before her and got up.

The train whistled. All the devotees alighted except P. V. Subramania Iyer, Devarajan, Vishalakshi and her husband.

Papa (to Vishalakshi): "It is time to get down."

Vishalakshi: "No, Papa, I am not getting down."

Papa: "Ah, what?"

S: "They are coming up to the next station, Papa."

They got down at the next station. Vishalakshi was weeping. Mataji and Papa encouraged her to go cheerfully.

Olavakkot and Podanur also were busy stations where a large number of devotees got in. At both these stations the devotees had brought plenty of food offerings to Papa. Papa had his evening meal after the train left Podanur. All the packets were opened for him to see, and he took a pinch from each and also a cup of milk. Then Mataji and S. had their meal. A number of oranges were lying on the seat. Papa took one, peeled it, and started eating without dentures. S. brought his dentures. Papa put them on and ate another orange, and then yet another.

Mataji: "Papa, we could have given you the oranges washed and properly peeled. You are taking them without being washed."

Papa laughed like a child, his feet one after the other stamping the floor. Mataji was very particular to see that fruits were well washed and cleaned before they were given to Papa. So she was not happy to see Papa eating them without being washed. Papa did not mind it.

At Erode, a fat Sindhi gentleman peeped into the compartment from the platform. Seeing Papa, he enquired of S. if that was Swami Ramdas Maharaj from Mangalore. Getting confirmation, he disappeared from there and came back, in five minutes, accompanied by another friend of his with some plantains. He introduced himself to Papa as having heard of him through his wife who had attended Papa's satsang at Premkutir in Bombay. She had, it seemed, written to him that he should not fail to meet Papa. So when he heard that Papa was travelling by that train he came to have his darshan.

Papa talked with the Sindhi friends for a few minutes and they took leave of Papa. Just after they had left, Papa said, "Ramdas ought to have given some plantains to them." He then went near the door and peeped out to see if they could be called. They were not to be seen. Again he said, "Ramdas ought to have given them. Now they have gone."

Mysteriously, in two or three minutes, the Sindhi friend entered the compartment, asking where Papa would be staying in Bombay. Papa was so happy to see him again.

Papa : "Oh, you have come. Ramdas was very sorry he did not give you some fruits before you left. He tried to call you back, but by that time you had gone. How gracious of you ! You yourself came back to receive the fruits !"

Papa then gave him a few plantains as prasad, and he left after getting the necessary information.

XXVIII

Bangalore, November 1, 1953

236. The train arrived in Bangalore, an hour late, at 8 a.m. At the
Papa Cantonment Station there were many devotees waiting. Papa was
honouring happy to meet P. S. G. Rao and Hanumantha Rao who had come
Mahatmas from Madras for his darshan.

Sarangapani Mudaliar and others garlanded Papa and Mataji. They were taken to his residence at 19, Race Course Road, and were received by Mrs. Mudaliar and her daughters, who performed arati to them. Sadhu Murugadas was waiting in the hall adjacent to the veranda, and as soon as Papa and Mataji entered the hall, he prostrated before them and ran up to join the bhajan that was already going on upstairs.

After a wash and breakfast, Papa sat for the bhajan. The bhajan came to a close at 9-30 a.m. but the devotees did not disperse till late in the afternoon. Sarangapani gave a feast to all of them on the auspicious occasion of Papa's visit to his house.

Sri Swami Hariharananda Bharati of Sri Ananta Swami Math, Bangalore, used to like Papa's company very much ; Papa also liked his company. Papa enquired about the Swami and wanted to go and meet him that afternoon. Papa also heard that Sri Swami Anandashram of Sri Chitrapur Math, Shirali, was in Bangalore. Papa always liked to avail himself of every opportunity to have his darshan.

After midday rest, Papa was told that Sri Swami Hariharananda had come. Papa went from his room to the hall and seated the Swamiji by his side on the chair provided. A few minutes later they were called in to take fruits. They sat together and had fruit at the same table, and then returned to the hall. A number of devotees were sitting on the floor. When it was about 3 p.m. Swamiji wanted to leave. Sri Dasappa, Minister of Finance, Mysore State, was also sitting just in front of the saints. When the Swamiji was about to get up, the whole gathering stood up.

Swami Hariharananda (*pointing to Dasappa*) : "These people have caught us. There is no escape from them."

Dasappa : "Swamiji, why do you say like this ? You are all mahatmas and we are all grihastas. Why do you say that you have no escape from us ?"

Swami Hariharananda : "But, I mean only about the body. As atman we are free always. This vyavahar is concerning the body only."

Papa (*to Swamiji*) : "Swamiji, why do you say like that ? Why not say that he (Dasappa) being Ram Himself you are right in saying that you are under his protection ? When everything is Ram we are all, of course, under His protection."

Swami Hariharananda : "Yes. If I make any mistake you are bound to correct me. If we have the blessings of mahatmas and the touch of their holy feet, everything is possible."

So saying, he touched Papa's feet. Papa also got up and touched Swamiji's feet saying, "The feet of mahatmas are like these."

Papa and party started at 3-30 p.m. Sarangapani Mudaliar had been asked to keep some garlands, fruits and sweets ready.

They first went to the Bowring Hospital, to see Sarangapani Mudaliar's second son Ranganathan, who had developed some serious illness the previous night and was admitted in the hospital. Getting down from the car near the ward, Papa, Mataji, Sarangapani, his wife, and S. went inside the ward where Ranganathan was being saline-fed intravenously. After enquiring how he was feeling and so on, Papa said, "You will be all right by the time we return from Anantapur."

From the hospital they drove to the residence of Sri Swami Anandashram. Anandashram Swamiji was the spiritual head of the Saraswat community. His math was at Shirali, N. Kanara. The Swamiji had a little earlier got the present house in Bangalore also for the math so that he could spend the summer there. He was sitting on a sofa in a fairly big room adjacent to the veranda. There was another sofa on one side, facing Swamiji's right. Papa entered the room with a garland. He garlanded the great saint and prostrated before him, his head touching Swamiji's feet. When Papa got up, Swamiji asked him to take his seat on the chair provided. Mataji prostrated before the saint, touching his feet, and took her seat a few yards in front of him.

Papa and Swamiji talked for a while about each other's tour, as Swamiji was also on a tour to the North.

Swamiji then requested Papa to have some milk or fruit, but Papa excused himself saying that he could not take anything at that time.

It was time to depart. Papa got up and prostrated.

Papa : "S. wishes to photograph you. He has got a cine-camera with him. Would you mind coming outside a short while, as it is too dark in this room?"

Swamiji consented, got up, changed his upper cloth, and came out with Papa, and the large group followed. S. filmed the whole party. Then Papa and those who came with him left.

Evening bhajan at Sarangapani Mudaliar's house was well attended. Most of the devotees dispersed by 9-30 p.m. A few were sitting with Papa in the room.

Papa : "Ramdas must sleep early tonight. Mataji also had no rest during the day, so it is better you all retire now."

November 2, 1953

237. 7 a.m. Sarangapani Mudaliar's house. Bhajan was to start at 7-15.
Samsara Papa was in his room and a few others were with him.
breeds sorrow

Papa (to C. Ramachandra Rao) : "Why is Bhavanishanker Rao not to be seen at all? Does he know that we are here?"

Ramachandra Rao : "He was not here for a long time. I am not sure if he has come back."

S : "He met Papa in Bombay last year."

Papa : "Yes, he lost his son a few months back and he and his wife were terribly grieved. A mother's sorrow on account of the death of any of her grown-up children is simply unbearable. Bhavanishanker Rao was attached to Ramdas for many years but now he has got so much entangled in his family matters that he hardly finds time for bhajan or to think of God."

S : "Papa, was he married when he accompanied Papa to the Himalayas?"

Papa : "He was married at that time and a great tussle was going on between him on one side and his relatives on the other."

S : "So, their will prevailed!"

Papa : "No. Later they also gradually changed and were coming to see Ramdas . . . The devotees advise those who are in trouble that the world is after all transitory; nothing is permanent here; attachment to these perishable objects is the cause of all sorrow; God alone is our refuge and so on. But if they themselves lose some of their close relations, they are very much affected; even more than

those to whom they have taught the transitory nature of things. Ramdas has seen many cases like this."

S: "If asked why they are so much affected despite all their knowledge what do they reply?"

Papa: "They keep quiet. If at all they reply they say, 'My wife is terribly affected on account of the death and when I see her in that condition I feel for her. But for her, I may not have been affected.' Thus the whole blame is put on the wife. It is to a great extent true. Men, when they are left alone, can control themselves. But women cannot. Seeing women in such a miserable plight and thus often reminded of the past calamity, men also grieve."

238. 7-15 a.m. Papa went for the bhajan. In the room only S. and Mataji remained. S. was writing his diary and Mataji was attending to various matters—washing, arranging things, and so on.
"He talked of nothing but God."

S (to Mataji): "However much I write this, I feel I have still more to write."

Mataji: "If you say so now, how much you could have recorded if you were with Papa some years back! In those days, he talked about nothing but God. When I met him he was like that. That was why he could open his whole mind to me. Otherwise how could I have attained Him so soon? Now he has hundred and one things to attend to. If it were in these days, I would not have gained so much."

S: "So, from what you say, Papa's so-called service is a disservice to real aspirants. Can it be so?"

Mataji: "Not so. Papa did not start these activities for a long time, but he found that those who joined him for sadhana could not devote themselves whole time to sadhana. So it was considered advisable to take up some activity so that they could partly devote their time to work and the rest to devotional practices. Otherwise Papa would not have started all these institutions."

Some mothers came in to see Mataji and prostrated before her. So she turned her attention towards them for sometime, and then asked them to go to bhajan-hall.

239. Mataji again came near S. and asked, "Do you know what I told
One Guru, M., before we went to see Anandashram Swamiji?"
several forms

S: "I only know that you asked P. S. G. Rao also to accompany us and sent Gajendra to get some fruits and flowers."

Mataji: "Is that all?"

S: "I do not know anything more."

Mataji: "Of course, I told Rao that he might come with us to see the Swamiji. So he sent for some flowers and fruits. I also suggested that he might offer some money to the Swamiji because that would do him good. He asked me how much he should offer. I left it to him to decide as he thought fit.

"I had told M. also to get some sweets, fruits and garlands. I suggested that he might also offer some money to the Swamiji. He asked me how much he should offer. But I left it to him. He again asked how much he should pay, fifty rupees or a hundred rupees. I made it clear that it was left to him. Then he replied, 'I have only one guru.' I quietly told him: You are right in saying that you have only one guru. But that very guru himself is coming in various forms. First you must be able to see your guru in saints and then in all beings and creatures. You are not asked to serve and worship only Anandashram Swamiji, but all saints and all beings. That is your goal.

"We are not always to remain with the narrow vision that our guru is only in one form. See how Papa himself is showing to us how we should pay due respects to other saints. He prostrates before them. Why is he doing it? Has he to gain anything more? It is for us to see and learn."

He was, of course, convinced.

240. Papa started at 3-30 p.m. for some visits. First he went to the **Papa blessing a mental patient** Anathalaya conducted by the manager of the Ashakta Poshaka Sabha. The Secretary of the sabha received Papa and party and took them round the new buildings that were getting ready to house the orphans. Mataji was happy to see the arrangements made to look after the orphans and enquired of the secretary if she could send some orphans, to which the secretary readily agreed.

The next visit was to a hospital to see a woman, a mental patient. She was lying on bed, hands and legs tied, and talking at random. Papa and Mataji stood before her and when she was told by her relatives that Swami Ramdas had come, she gazed intently. She expressed in Telugu that she could not make pranams to Papa as her hands were tied. Papa told her that it was enough if she mentally prostrated. She, however, requested Papa to place his foot on her head which he did, sitting on a chair near her. Just after this, she closed her eyes for some time and talked to herself: 'Oh Narayana, how gracious you are to have brought this saint here to bless

me !' But the next minute she changed and started behaving abnormally, biting her rug. Papa blessed her and assured her husband that she would be well soon. It was told later that this woman had a dream some days earlier in which she saw Papa whom she had not met before. From that time she had been worrying her husband to take her to Papa.

After getting into the car, Mataji said, "Papa, how bold you were to sit near her and place your foot on her head. I was afraid she might bite your foot."

Papa: "Ramdas did not think of it. It seems somebody who was mad was brought to Ramana Maharshi. He was asked to place his head at Maharshi's feet. But the fellow bit Maharshi's toe. After that nobody was permitted to touch his feet."

241. At his house, Sarangapani Mudaliar enquired of Mataji about the **Only cheerful offerings benefit** construction work of the new kitchen, the entire cost of which he had agreed to bear.

Sarangapani Mudaliar: "How is the construction work going on, Mataji?"

Mataji: "The walls have been raised and the roofing work will be started soon. We have still five hundred rupees out of the amount you had sent on that account. It is only in the account. We have used up the money for food."

Sarangapani Mudaliar: "If money is wanted I shall send, Mataji."

Mataji: "It is all right. We shall write to you when we have spent the balance amount also. Otherwise you might get tired of sending money. I do not want anybody to feel that way. Money is after all money, you see. It is hard to part with it. Unless one cheerfully gives it, one cannot have the benefit of giving. That is why we have stopped even taking loans from anybody. We noticed that those persons, from whom we took loans, had been disturbed in mind on that account and their attitude towards us also changed. So, why should we give room for anybody's downfall? Now we are trying to manage without raising loans from devotees."

En route from Bangalore to Anantapur. November 3, 1953

242. **Mataji's rules of cleanliness** While on travel, Mataji generally kept for Papa a spare set of dress and an additional towel, so that if at any time change was necessary it could be made without delay. That morning, just after the train left Bangalore, Papa got up from his seat to go to the water-closet, and his towel fell on the floor. Mataji took it, folded

and kept it in a handbag, and replaced it with another. In another hour, when Papa got up from his seat, that towel too fell on the floor. Mataji again took it, put it in the bag, and gave him another of a smaller size, which she had kept for her use, as that was then at hand and as Papa's towels were in the suitcase. Every time a new towel was given, Papa was asking Mataji, "Why should Ramdas change the towel? It just touched the ground and you have kept it aside. What is the harm in using the same thing?"

After a time the third towel also fell on the ground. Mataji did not notice it as she was facing the opposite side. S. laughed and was about to tell Mataji.

Papa (*laughing*) : "Don't tell her, don't tell her."

Mataji turned towards Papa and asked what the matter was.

S. had to say then that Papa's towel had fallen again and that he had picked it up himself.

Mataji took that towel from Papa and gave him a small handkerchief. Papa put it in his pocket.

S : "Papa, perhaps this is the punishment for dropping all the towels. You are now to manage with a kerchief."

Papa : "This is better. Ramdas can put it in the pocket and it won't fall down."

S : "That is the consolation."

Mataji : "This will do. Why should Papa have that long one? He has to put it round the neck or hold it. This small thing he can put in his pocket."

Papa : "When everything happens for good, is this also not for good?"

Mataji : "From next time I shall keep four towels outside instead of two."

S : "Papa, Mataji has very much relaxed the rigid rules of cleanliness."

Papa : "Is it so?"

Mataji : "If you all do not take to my path, I must take to your path. I find that you only go your own way. I am trying to give up mine and follow yours."

The train reached Anantapur at 4-30 p.m. Satyanarayana Rao, Venkatesan, Ramachandra Rao, Rama Rao, Nagesh Rao and a few others received Papa at the platform and took the party to the residence of Satyanarayana Rao in Sarojini Street Extension.

243. 7-30 a.m. Satyanarayana Rao's house. Papa was sitting on a sofa in the room set apart for him. A few devotees were sitting in front on the floor. Satyanarayana Rao introduced a new arrival, saying, "Papa, this friend wants to talk to Papa about the great work he has been doing."

**Atharvana
Veda**

Papa: "Come on. Sit down. What have you got to say?"

New friend: "I have translated the *Atharvana Veda* into Telugu. I want to publish and popularise it as far as possible."

Papa: "Why do you have a special preference for *Atharvana Veda*?"

Friend: "*The Vedas* are inspired writings of sages and they are being ignored nowadays."

Papa: "Why do you take up *Atharvana Veda* only? In fact we are advised not to study *Atharvana Veda* because it deals with various powers, how to attain them and so on and so forth."

Janakiram: "Papa, it deals with science of the advanced type, engineering and so on. This friend says that there are ways and means mentioned therein to counteract the effect of atom bomb and other latest weapons."

Friend: "Swamiji, I request you to give me an hour or so to talk to the audience in your presence about this *Veda*."

Papa: "Ramdas cannot follow your language, Telugu. He can understand only if you speak in English."

Friend: "I am not well up in English but shall however try. Most of the audience will not understand English."

Papa: "So you do not mind even if Ramdas does not know what you talk."

Friend: "I do mind."

A devotee: "Has Papa anything more to know?"

Papa: "Don't know. He knows Ramnam. That is all."

Janakiram: "Papa, let him speak in English."

Papa: "All right. So we are going to hear something about developing supernatural powers. In fact, we must know that however great the powers one may attain, they are all purely in the material plane. They have no entry into the spiritual realm. One may be able to show a lot of tricks like stopping a running train, taking different things from the air and so on and so forth, and still remain a spiritual bankrupt."

The friend then spoke for sometime on *Atharvana Veda*.

244. In the afternoon at 2 o'clock, Papa was present in the hall. The
Swami time for questions and answers was from 2-10 to 3-30. Seeing
Ramatirtha mostly lawyers sitting in the hall, Papa remarked: "Most of you
are lawyers sitting to hear Ramdas. Lawyers are not an inspiring
audience. But they can be inspired."

Venkatesan: "Papa, in the latest publication of the Ramatirtha Publishing League, your letter to them has been published as a foreword. It is a very nice appreciation of Ramatirtha. Papa has quoted Ramatirtha's utterance, 'I am God, so are you'."

Papa: "Oh, they have published that letter itself! Yes, Ramdas remembers always those words of Ramatirtha, and also what he said once to an American audience. Once he was delivering a speech to a large gathering and was referring to God as He, She and sometimes as It. This perplexed one friend who got up and asked, 'Swamiji, you are referring to God as He, She and It. Can you tell me whether God is Mr., Mrs. or Miss?' To this Ramatirtha replied, 'God is neither Mr. nor Mrs. nor Miss, but a mystery.'

"He was a great sannyasi. Ramdas is only a child before such sannyasis. Ramdas has the highest regard for them. What do you think Ramdas is? He is not a sannyasi, because the name Ramdas does not fit in for a sannyasi. He is not a bhakta, nor a yogi, nor a bhogi."

One devotee: "He is Ram."

245. Papa: "Long ago when Ramdas was in Junagadh (he wore ochre
Name and clothes in those days), he asked somebody spontaneously where the
dress Ram Mandir was. He found himself later in a Ram Mandir.
Sannyasis do not go there. But the mahant somehow liked Ramdas
very much. He asked Ramdas, 'What is your name?' Ramdas replied, 'Ramdas'."

Mahant: "Ha, what is this? Your name and ochre clothes do not go together. You must either put on white clothes and stay here or change your name into Ramagiri or Ramapuri or something like that and go away from here."

Papa continued: "Ramdas humbly told him that the name and cloth were given to him by Ram and he was not prepared to change either till Ram commanded him to do so. Ramdas then left the place. In a few minutes Ramdas found a sannyasi who took him to the Sannyas Ashram. Ramdas stayed there for about fifteen days. That mahant also liked Ramdas. It was the custom in that ashram to distribute the cash collections received from devotees to all the sannyasis present there. Some one brought to Ramdas his share and asked his name for entering in the register. All those fifteen days they had not known his name. When Ramdas mentioned his name, they were shocked. The Mahant said, 'How did you manage to stay here? This is meant only for sannyasis. You say your name is Ramdas. How does it fit your robes? You must change your name.' Ramdas gave him the same reply as he did to the mahant of Ram Mandir. The mahant then suggested that the money might be shown in their books as given to a sannyasi, without mentioning any name. But Ramdas told the mahant that he did not need any money. This was another surprise to them as all others were so eager to have the money.

246. **Papa free of spiritual disciplines** "So, 'Swami' and 'Ramdas' together do not sound well. Ramdas never wanted to be called a swami. Now his geruva cloth is gone, but 'swami' remains. The word 'swami' fits well with the names 'Sivananda', 'Vivekananda' and so on, but not with 'Ramdas.' Ramdas has travelled all over India and has met many saints. But he has not found any now living, who has not been bound to some sadhana or other and is entirely free from all spiritual discipline. Ramdas is moving about like a free child without any sort of sadhana or discipline. Looking at him (with the usual white clothes on) one might think he has no devotion for God. Ramdas does not meditate or pray. How can one say he has faith in God?"

Papa (to one devotee): "You have been taking God's name all these years. Don't you feel that you are advancing on the path and that it will take you to the goal?"

Devotee: "I do feel much better than before, but there are periods of great mental depression and then I do not know where I stand."

Papa: "If you had not found the taste of Ramnam you would have left it long ago. Regarding the moments of depression, it is your own fault. When you take Ramnam in full swing, you are elated and feel happy. But when you become slack in your sadhana, you get worried and depressed."

Papa (to Janakiram of Penukonda): "How is your nama sankirtan going on?"

Janakiram: "Fine. All the devotees are very enthusiastic. Once we start, we ceaselessly repeat till we close the function. It is a source of great joy to all."

Papa: "You have electrified the whole place with Ramnam. It is said that it is not we who take the Name but the Name possesses us. Once it possesses us, it will never leave us. Ramdas was possessed by it and he is free like a child today."

XXIX

Anantapur, November 5, 1953

247. Satyanarayana Rao's house. Papa's urine was sent to the doctor
Doctors for sugar and specific gravity test. Venkatesan, who took it to the
terrify doctor, came back.

Papa : "What is the result of the test?"

Venkatesan : "Papa, the doctor says that there is two and a half per cent sugar and the specific gravity is one thousand and twentyfive."

Papa : "What? Ramdas never had so much any time before. It was never more than one per cent in the morning and Ramdas has been very careful in his diet."

Venkatesan : "The doctor says it is pretty high and the urine was brick red. He feels it may perhaps be due to exertion during the journey."

Papa : "Somehow Ramdas does not care much for the report of these doctors. They terrify people. Once, many years ago, a doctor examined a patient and found out that he was so bad that he ought to have died ! But that man is even today quite alive and kicking."

9 p.m. After the bhajan, most of the devotees had left the place. Only a few were with Papa in his room.

248. The devotees were called for dinner in the adjoining hall. Some
Telugu of them went, while a few others remained with Papa. Papa asked
version them also to go and have their meal. Leaves had already been
of Papa's spread and meal served for all of them. As soon as they sat, they
poems started singing "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram" and after a few
 minutes some verses in Telugu were sung. Papa had pulled his chair
to the entrance of the hall and was facing the devotees dining in the hall. Papa liked the verses sung by Appannachar very much, though he could not have understood their meaning. After singing two or three verses, they commenced dining—thereafter they all rejoined Papa in his room.

Papa (to Appannachar) : "Your verses are very nice. Whose composition are they?"

Nagesh Rao : "They were all composed by Appannachar himself and are the translations of Papa's poems."

Papa : "Are they? How many has he translated? They have been translated into Marathi also."

Nagesh Rao : "He has translated quite a number."

Appannachar then brought his notebook in which he had written the English originals and the translations, and read out both to Papa. While reading the second poem in English, Papa asked, "Sure? Is it written by Ramdas?"

Appannachar : "Yes, Papa."

Papa : "Ramdas does not remember at all. He cannot think he could have written this."

Appannachar continued to read a few more and sang his Telugu translations.

Prof. Krishna Rao : "Your poems treat of such high philosophy that it is hard to translate."

Appannachar : "Whenever we read a poem we are lifted up and up so high."

Papa : "So it takes you right high up and leaves you there."

Janakiram : "And by the time we come down, another poem comes from Papa to shoot us back to the heights."

Krishna Rao : "They are very difficult to understand."

249. Papa : "You will see a poem published in the current issue of
Papa's *The Vision*. Take that copy. Ramdas will read it out to you. It is
poems— about Divine Life."
'prose run mad'

Papa then read aloud the poem :

'Life is fragrant, sweet and glorious,
Is eternal, blissful and tranquil
Life is love that gently flows
In crystal streams luminous.

This life is Mother, everywhere revealed
 In myriad forms, movements, ways.
 The blue, the green, the crimson, the yellow hues
 Lavish in their varied luxuriance,
 And rich with untold beauties, expressed,
 In verdure, heavens, earth and dawn,
 Cast their mystic spell on thee.
 O Mother Nature—this is all Thy play !
 A festival of light and colour, O soul, bewitches the heart.
 When Mother's grace descends on thee,
 Thou art lost in the splendour of Her presence
 That resolves all diversity into one Supreme whole—
 The vast cosmos and beyond—
 And into that Infinite in which everything is and is not !

Krishna Rao : "That is exactly the thing, Papa. We cannot understand, even if explained, more than what we have experienced."

Papa : "You find something good in Ramdas's poem then. Don't you ?"

Nagesh : "Why should Papa doubt it ?"

Papa : "No, Ramdas does not know how they are. He does not give much thought to them. He writes all these in the midst of noise and disturbance. And he does not care about the metres or syllables. Some sentences are long and some are short. Some lines are very prosaic."

Appannachar : "When the ideas are high, sometimes the language and the poetic style are not up to the mark."

Papa : "A critic of poetry remarked once, referring to the work of a poet, like this : 'This is not poetry, but prose run mad.' This is exactly what Ramdas's poetry is. Are Ramdas's poems getting better or worse ; how do you feel ?"

Janakiram : They are as good as ever."

Papa : "Ramdas asked because he cannot judge them himself. When he heard the old poems read out to him, he found them very good. So, he is wondering if the present ones are as good as the old."

Janakiram : "They are, Papa."

Papa : "So Ramdas can boldly continue writing poems. Can he not ?"

Satyanarayana Rao : "Should we, poor low creatures, certify Papa's poems ?"

Papa: "Low or high is no matter. When you say they are good, Ramdas feels he can boldly go on writing."

250. 9-30 p.m. It was time for Papa to retire. The devotees left the room. Mataji and Mrs. Krishna Rao were massaging Papa.

No worldly knowledge equals inner bliss

Papa (to Mataji): "One of them has translated Ramdas's poems into Telugu. They say he has done it nicely. They are full of appreciation for Ramdas's poems. Does Ramdas write so well? He does not think that he has any ability to write, lecture, or do anything. The one thing that he is fully aware of is the bliss that he constantly has."

Mataji: "At least you say you have one thing?"

Papa: "Bliss he has, and he knows well that he has it. Other talents he has not. But he is sure he is not prepared to give this bliss up even if someone is ready to give him all the worldly knowledge of writing, speaking and so on, in exchange for the bliss. This alone will do for him."

November 6, 1953

251. Papa got up a little after 6 a.m. Satyanarayana Rao, Krishna Rao, and a few others were in the hall writing Ramnam. As soon as the door was opened, they entered the room and prostrated before Papa. They then sat around him and continued writing Ramnam.

Ineffable bliss through Japa Yajna

Krishna Rao: "Papa, this is the first thing we do—finish the quota of Ramnam."

Papa: "In the ashram all together write thirty to forty thousand Ramnam daily. Mataji is also writing. She writes a very beautiful hand in Devanagari script. Lately she has not been able to write because of heavy work. There is enthusiastic response to this Nama Likhit Japa Yajna from all parts of India. Many feel that this has come to them as a blessing, as the time wasted in gossip is now better utilised for writing Ramnam."

Krishna Rao: "The peace we get while writing is indescribable."

Papa: "That is what many devotees also write to Ramdas."

252. Papa's breakfast was brought. After breakfast Papa returned and continued the talk.

Do not overstress vegetarianism

Satyanarayana Rao: "Papa, Christians talk of repentance, confession and so on. Are they not all on the plane of duality?"

Papa : "Yes, the talk is always on the plane of duality."

Venkatesan : "So, the teachings of Christ are based on dualism. Christ never said that he himself was God. He only declared that he and his Father in Heaven are one. Of course, Sufism transcends all these. One sufi saint was saying, 'Anal Haq' (I am God). Even when his body was cut into pieces, each piece of the body continued saying, 'Anal Haq.' Papa, one muslim friend told me that non-vegetarianism was prescribed in olden days for people of the most uncivilized type living in places where nothing but meat was available. In these days of vegetarianism it has no place."

Papa : "Was he a vegetarian himself?"

Venkatesan : "Yes, he was."

Papa : "That is the way they support their own point of view. An English lady was a pure vegetarian and had a great leaning towards non-violence. She was telling Ramdas that Christ was a pure vegetarian. But the scriptures clearly show us that he was not. She had great respect for Christ and therefore could not think of Jesus taking non-vegetarian food for which she had a contempt. So she brought him to her own level. As Jesus has it, 'Not that which goes into the mouth defileth a man but that cometh out of the mouth that defileth a man.' It does not matter whatever food we eat, but it is of great importance what we express through our mouth. There are many strict vegetarians who have a furious temper, and filthy words come out of their mouths."

Satyanarayana Rao : "Papa, there are some devotees waiting to perform pada-pooja."

Papa : "Oh ! (*jumping up from the seat*) : The time is up. Why did you not remind him of this earlier ? Let us go."

253. 9-45 a.m. The morning bhajan was over. Mataji had yet to arrange
Papa's need Papa's bath. Papa had not been quite normal in his health since he
for exercise left the ashram on tour. So he suggested to Mataji, "Ramdas must
go for evening walk regularly. He should not miss it."

S : "Papa, we forgot all about the evening walk after starting on the tour."

Papa : "We had better start it now."

S : "What time ? 5 to 6 may be all right."

Papa : "Yes." (to Venkatesan) "Ramdas would like to take a long walk in the evening between 5 and 6."

Venkatesan : "We shall take Papa in a car to the vicinity of the tank and there Papa can take a long walk on the road. There will be little traffic then."

Satyanarayana Rao : "The tank is full, Papa."

Papa : "What does it matter ? Ramdas is not going to swim."

Venkatesan : "So, it is fixed that we go from here at 5 o'clock and, near the tank, break."

Papa : "What to do near the tank, bray ?"

Venkatesan : "Break."

Papa : "Ramdas thought you want us to go near the tank, and bray !"

Nanjunda Sastri : "Are we to go there and break the car ?"

Venkatesan : "That is fine. We neither bray nor break the car. We only get down near the tank, walk for about an hour and come back."

254. Some devotees came for darshan. Papa sat on his chair. The
Universe is devotees, after paying respects, sat before him. Those who were
Mother's already in the room also sat down.
form

One devotee : "Swami, many horrible things are going on in the world. Why does God permit all these things ?"

Papa : "The whole universe is a play of Shakti. Shakti is the dynamic aspect of Shiva. Shiva is the eternal, changeless Reality. Its dynamic aspect, Shakti, takes all the forms. That is also called prakriti. Shakti can again be described as two—Para-shakti and Aparā-shakti. Para-shakti is that which is beyond all gunas. Aparā-shakti is that which manifests itself as and in all gunas. Ours is to surrender to para-shakti. What do you mean by surrender ? Surrender here means to know and feel that all our actions are Her actions ; all our movements are Her movements. If we live our life with this attitude, our ego-sense will gradually disappear. In fact, all the various forms of the universe are Her forms. The whole universe is the form of the Mother, and we are not each a separate form. We all together make up the Mother's divine form. We think we are males, some others are females and so on. But when we

once know all are the forms of the Mother, we see that all are females. The only male is Shiva—the Purusha. If you attain this consciousness, you will easily get over the sex idea. You will never feel you are a male, different from the other sex. You will thus feel one with the whole existence."

255. One devotee : "We kindly request Papa to enlighten us as to how
Ramnam the to get that consciousness."
only way

Papa : "Ramnam. Ramnam is the only way."

Venkatesan : "Ramnam is the panacea for all the ills of life. Let us hoist the flag of Ramnam everywhere."

Papa : "We have a big flag in the ashram in orange colour, with *Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram* embroidered on it in Hindi."

256. Mataji : "I am arranging for the bath and shall send for Papa in
Servant a few minutes."

becomes
master Papa : "Yes."

Mataji went into the bathroom.

Papa : "Mother's will be done! Ramdas generally submits to her. But sometimes he rebels. Because if, at least sometimes, he does not rebel, he will be taken to be a very tame chap and considered good for nothing. When he asserts himself sometimes, she will know he has plenty of guts in him."

Venkatesan : "But that assertion becomes finally submission."

Papa : "Yes, invariably."

Satyanarayana Rao : "Is that assertion not mithya?"

Papa : "Assertion and submission, both are mithya. So far as the play is concerned, both are real. Beyond that, both cease to have any reality."

Venkatesan : "It is better to have the servant bhava with the Lord. Is it not, Papa?"

Papa : "A real servant becomes a master automatically. Hanumanji was the humblest servant of Rama. See how he behaved in Lanka, He was a terror there.

You become a servant in order to go beyond the idea of master and servant. 'Aham Brahmasmi' is the attitude of a jnani. 'I am a servant of God' is the attitude of one on the bhakti path."

One devotee : "Swamiji, I am troubled much."

Papa : "Do not trouble trouble till trouble troubles you." (*Everybody including the questioner burst into uproarious laughter*).

5 p.m. Papa, followed by some devotees, left by car for an evening drive and walk on the bund of the tank, and returned a few minutes after 6 o'clock.

After the evening bhajan, Papa came back and took his seat in the room. Janakiram's wife sat before him, holding his feet and shedding profuse tears. She was sorry that Papa did not visit her village and stay in her house for at least two days as before. Papa consoled her in many ways. Now Janakiram also came and sat by her side, and started stroking Papa's feet.

257. Papa (*to Janakiram*) : "Do you find a strange glow in Ramdas's
A devotee's face ? Is he diffusing light ?"
experience of
Papa's grace Janakiram, hearing that, melted away like butter and placed his
 head at Papa's feet.

Janakiram : "Papa, it is simply wonderful that you ask me this question now. I had a dream four or five days back, when I saw the bust of Papa diffusing such a bright and powerful light of love and compassion that I was quite overpowered by joy. This experience lasted for about ten minutes. Papa is asking me now if I see a strange glow in his face. Is it not simply wonderful ? In fact I do not miss Papa even for a day. Any moment I want Papa, Papa is with me to solve any problem. The answers are ready before me. So, I never feel your separation. I do not have to write to you often."

Papa : "It is well if all the devotees do likewise, as Ramdas will have his correspondence reduced to a great extent. Now he is dictating about twenty to thirty letters daily in the ashram."

Janakiram : "I do not have to write to Papa except perhaps about some spiritual matters. Even spiritual matters are solved without resorting to correspondence."

Papa : "How Ramdas wishes he were in your place !"

Janakiram fell at Papa's feet saying, "Ah, Ramachandra! What do you say, Papa?"

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas really feels it. In his life he missed this joy that you are getting now. He met some saints but never felt so much joy as you all feel now. He simply sat before them and after some time left the place and never felt like doing any service. He was sitting before the saints, completely absorbed and unconcerned. Even food, somebody had to force him to take. Instead of his doing service to saints he was receiving service. The sadhus were very kind to him and they looked after him very lovingly and tenderly. Thus you will find that he missed the sort of joy and ecstasy that you are now experiencing."

Janakiram was simply moved to tears and was intently gazing at Papa.

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas does feel he is sometimes radiating a strange and powerful light from his face. It is more when he is in a state of high ecstasy."

November 7, 1953

258. It was past noon. Papa was resting. In the adjoining room Mataji
Mataji's and S. were sitting together. They were cutting some fruits for
instinctive Papa.
reaction

Mataji: "J.'s wife wanted to talk to me. She was waiting for a chance when I was free. Yesterday afternoon when Papa had gone for the talks at two o'clock, I called her in to hear what she wanted to say. She narrated a lot of her family worries, financial difficulties and the unworldly nature of her husband. She said J. would bring money and hand it over to her and would not care to see how things were managed. I told her that such a husband had to be looked after with all love and care. She wanted to touch my feet and hands, but I was feeling so uncomfortable in her presence that I wished I had been left alone. The moment she was about to touch me, I was shuddering within myself. I was also wondering why I had such a reaction. Again in the night she came as soon as I was about to close the door to rest for some time. I did not want her to come in, but she did all the same. She went on speaking about her husband, how a number of people were coming there, how she found it difficult to serve them and so on. Finally she said that she felt very close to me and once saw me in everything for a few minutes. She added that she thought of me often and wished to be with me as she felt deeply attached to me. Then I understood why I was feeling a revulsion for her. I have an inward revulsion towards anybody who attaches himself or herself to me, leaving Papa aside. In this case I did not know about it until she told me. But my revulsion for her had started before I was aware of it."

S: "When they love you so much, is it proper to maintain such an attitude towards them?"

Mataji: "Such an attitude of mine will not do them harm. It will only help them to take their mind off me and place it on Papa. That will give them salvation. By merely depending upon me they get nothing."

S: "Why not?"

Mataji: "Because I had been cherishing such a wish for many years. There used to be questions and answers within myself during my sadhana days. The question was whether I should become a guru like Papa. The questioner was Papa himself from within. My answer to that question was that I should never be a teacher but only a devotee all my life in the service of Papa. Many times I took Papa severely to task mentally for putting such fantastic questions to me. At present I do not wish or express anything of that type. My previous sankalpa works. Nobody can get spiritual benefit from me direct. They must approach Papa. If they cling on to me knowing that Papa and I are one, then it is all right."

S: "Then what do you think J.'s wife is doing? What is her attitude?"

Mataji: "I don't know."

S: "Do you think she clings only to this one form of yours and that is why you have a revulsion for her?"

Mataji: "Most probably. Suppose she loves me with a broader outlook and sees me in all, as she said, then she must automatically love all. Such a big heart is not seen in her. So her attachment seems to be purely to my physical form."

259. S: "Mataji, you were telling something about prasad this morning. What was it?"
Value of prasad

Mataji: "Yes, I remember that. When S. M. with his wife and children was returning to his place this morning, I gave him some fruits as prasad. He immediately said he did not want them. But on second thought he took them from me. The moment he said he did not want them, I felt sore about it as it was very wrong to refuse prasad. He did not know the value of prasad.

"I still remember what he did when he took us in his car to Kasaragod. He left us at the railway station. D. had brought some mangoes from the ashram and he lovingly offered him two or three mangoes, but he said that he did not want to take them as he was always eating prasad. When D. forced on him a few, he took them

and passed them on to the railway porter standing on the platform. I was sorry for this behaviour of his. Within a short time he got some trouble in his tongue and it became so serious that he could not eat anything for some days. In those days he had contempt for those who were taking prasad from us. He used to laugh at them. Now his attitude has much changed. He has climbed down to a great extent."

S: "When he did not take the prasad offered to him, why did you feel that he did so in an arrogant or insulting attitude? He might have done it with a pure heart and meant what he said, that he was always eating Papa's prasad only."

Mataji: "It was very clear from his face. Because of my faith and my knowledge of its effects, I felt he should not have refused it that way."

S: "Suppose one has absolutely no faith in it, what would you then say?"

Mataji: "Faith or no faith, the effect of the prasad is there when one takes it. It is like putting your hand on fire; whether you have faith or not, the hand will be burnt. There is a story in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* or somewhere, I was told, that even a dog which ate the excreta of a saint got a better birth in the next life. Even the excreta that comes out of a saint's body works such wonders; then what about the prasad when taken by human beings? If it is taken with all love and faith its effect will, of course, be marvellous. One should never refuse prasad when offered. The other day when we all went to see Sri Anandashram Swamiji, you saw me asking for some fruits as prasad. I kept the fruits safe, washed them, cut them and gave them to Papa. Afterwards Papa asked me, 'Where are the fruits that we got from Swamiji?' I, of course, explained to him that they were the very fruits that he had taken just then. He himself is giving so much importance to prasad."

S: "When you mention this I remember one incident. When Papa went to Ramana Maharshi, he gave him some prasad. But Papa, instead of eating it, gave it to the dog that was standing near. According to you it amounted to insult."

Mataji: "He was on a vow of saltless diet."

S: "That should not have made him refuse prasad. Prasad is above all such restrictions."

Mataji: "As I have already told you, in Papa's case it was different. His sadhana was so intense that he never depended upon any external help. He could stand alone like that, but not any of us."

S: "I pointed out this instance because you said even Papa is anxious to take prasad."

Mataji: "Papa did not have to take it. But he took it now to show all of us its importance."

XXX

Anantapur, November 7, 1953

260. 9 p.m. Satyanarayana Rao's house. The devotees, who were
Papa and sitting round Papa, got up and left the room. The bed was being
Mataji on made for Papa by S. and three other devotees. Noticing that four
themselves people were preparing his bed, Papa remarked to Nanjunda Sastri
 who was standing by his side: "How big Ramdas has become!
Four people to make his bed! Even Rajas and Maharajas may not have four people
to make their bed."

Sastri: "Two of them are graduates and one is an engineer."

Papa: "Oh, two graduates, one engineer and one sannyasi. Ramdas has
really become very great. There is no doubt about it."

Mataji who was in the adjacent room was overhearing all this. She now
peeped in and asked Papa, "Since when?"

Papa: "Ramdas knows of it just now."

Papa went to bed. Mataji and Krishna Rao's wife massaged Papa. Krishna
Rao, Satyanarayana Rao, Sastri and S. were sitting near the cot.

Satyanarayana Rao: "Papa, you were quite right when you said that Mataji
is a better orator than yourself. She gave us a lecture this evening. It was simply
marvellous. She was vehement and hard-hitting."

Papa: "What was she talking about?"

Satyanarayana Rao: "The main point she touched was the question how many
of us who say we are devotees of Papa are really desirous to have his grace?"

Papa: "That is her favourite subject."

Mataji (*in Konkani*): "I did not wish to talk about that, but was dragged into
it. I asked them, what is it that they exactly do while they talk so much about service,

They may think, on seeing Papa, to give a donation of a hundred rupees. When they put their hands into the purse, only a rupee comes out. After taking it out they look up to the sky and down to the earth and finally decide not to give anything. That is their spirit of service ! This is the only way I can talk."

Papa (*to the devotees*) : "Mataji was giving Ramdas a gist of what she told you."

Mataji : "I do not know how to talk beautifully and in a pleasing way. Papa does it very nicely. He talks indirectly and the person concerned has only to take the cap if it fits him. But I directly hit those concerned."

Papa : "When Ramdas speaks, he does not look at the person about whom he is talking, but looks at another. The person concerned may know that it is aimed at him and, if the cap fits him, may put it on. Sometimes every one thinks it is aimed at the other and nobody takes it. But Mataji's way is to use force and give a straight injection and end the matter. Mataji was something like fire."

Krishna Rao : "Why 'was'? She is fire."

Papa : "In the ashram she goes on lecturing when she gets angry. It may be in any language ; that does not matter. Ramdas cannot talk like her. In the early days her main attack was on Ramdas, and Ramdas also was a fiery fellow."

S : "After heated arguments, it seems, Papa used to run away to the hillock at night and spend the night there."

Papa : "Yes, she was a terror in those days and Ramdas used to run away. But now he won't do it. He cannot sleep on thorns and stones, and in chill weather. Further, he is submissive nowadays."

S : "By getting angry, her head gets heated. Anybody who is unfortunate enough to go and talk to her at that time will get from her a good share of scolding. Last year, one day Mataji was very angry with the workers in the ashram kitchen and she had given them a bit of her mind—not a small bit, but a fairly large bit. Just at that time, Chandrakalaben, wife of Natverlal Parikh of Bombay, both of whom were staying in the ashram for a few days, came to Mataji and returned a few vegetables that were sent to her in the morning from the kitchen. Seeing her returning the vegetables, Mataji flung some hot words at her. Noticing that Mataji was not in her normal temper, Chandrakalaben quietly asked Mataji, 'May I bring the oil bottle and apply some oil on your head?' This question itself cooled down Mataji and she agreed to have some oil for her head." (*All have a hearty laugh in which Mataji also joins*).

261. 8-30 a. m. Papa, Mataji and other devotees left for the opening of
Realisation the new building of the Homeopathic Association. The foundation
not attained stone had been laid by Papa in February 1951. The members
in a day considered themselves fortunate to have the opening ceremony
performed as well by Papa. After the short function, Papa
and party returned.

It was very late when Mataji, Krishna Rao, Satyanarayana Rao and S. sat for lunch. Krishna Rao, who had come from Gulbarga for the occasion, was to return that evening and therefore anxious to dine along with Mataji.

Krishna Rao (*to Mataji*) : "I was telling Papa that I was given the Ram mantra on the Ram Navami day in 1943. Now it is ten years; and what progress have we made after all?"

Mataji : "What did Papa say?"

Krishna Rao : "Papa said that we should not think there is no progress at all. The progress is there. Realisation is not a thing to be attained in a day. We must have the necessary preparation to receive the final touch. It cannot be done all of a sudden. The guru is looking after the progress, and so on."

Mataji : "Were you satisfied with the answer?"

Krishna Rao : "Yes."

262. An hour or two after dinner, Mataji and S. were alone in the
Why aspirants room.
were directed

to Papa Mataji : "Did you hear what Krishna Rao said about Papa's reply?"
S : "I heard him."

Mataji : "After hearing him, I was thinking within myself why I should have talked to Satyanarayana Rao and Laxmi Devi in that strain as I did yesterday."

S : "Do you mean to say that what you talked yesterday would appear to contradict what Papa had told them?"

Mataji : "Superficially they appear contradictory. But one has to think deep and understand what we both mean."

S : "There is no contradiction if we understand aright."

Mataji: "But, for those who do not carefully study them, these apparently contradictory statements will prove disturbing. That is why I am not in the habit of talking about spiritual subjects to anybody. I would talk only about work and other general matters and was strictly avoiding spiritual topics. Nowadays, however, when you ask questions, I talk to you. I talk to some others also, but generally I direct all to Papa for spiritual instructions."

263. 2 p.m. It was the time for questions and answers. The hall was full. A boy came to Papa with a Ramnam book and a fountain pen for Papa's signature. Papa took both from him and signed. While returning the pen, he noticed that the pen was badly leaking and there were inkstains on his fingers.

Papa: "Ramdas has plenty of ink on his fingers."

Satyanarayana Rao got up and wiped the fingers with his towel. But the stains would not go. He then went inside and got a cup of water and a basin. Papa washed his fingers, but the stains did not completely disappear.

Papa: "Let the mark remain there."

One devotee: "It is just like the vasanas that leave a mark even after they are washed off."

Papa: "Vasanas may be driven out of the mind. But they persist in the body. One whose mind is free from vasanas is said to have manosiddhi. One whose body is free from vasanas is said to have kayasiddhi. One who has kayasiddhi is said to have completely eradicated all his vasanas both from his mind and body. That is perfection in yoga. Some jnanis stop at eradicating the vasanas from the mind and do not care about their ejection from the body. But there are some siddhas who have perfected the body also. By so doing, they say they are divinising the body. They make the light of the Atman permeate the body to such an extent that every particle of the body is made holy and shines with the divine radiance."

Devotee: "Will such a body die?"

Papa: "It may die, but the man will be entirely free from all vasanas even on his physical plane."

Devotee: "Is Sri Aurobindo's yoga the same?"

Papa: "Something like that. But he claimed that the body can be made immortal, drawing its sustenance from the cosmic energy, so that it can live on for

ever. Here you will have no need for food or water and will not have to relieve yourself. Every particle of your body becomes a vehicle of divine power, every movement of your body is a movement of bliss."

264.

Devotee: "Is your Sri Ram different from Dasaratha Ram?"

What Ram is

Papa: "Ramdas will answer you in Kabir's words. He was also put the same question. He said, 'My Ram is the great Truth, Impersonal, dwelling in the hearts of all beings and creatures in the universe. My Ram is the all-pervading, immanent and all-transcendent Reality. My Ram has assumed the forms of all beings and things and my Ram is Dasaratha's son also. My Ram is the all-inclusive and all-transcendent Supreme Godhead'."

Devotee: "By saying so, do you mean that Dasaratha Ram and other manifestations are same to you."

Papa: "Yes."

Devotee: "Then, how is Ram considered as an avatar?"

Papa: "Though God manifests Himself in all beings, the intensity of the manifestation differs—in some it is more, in some others it is less. There are some big waves and also small waves in the ocean. Big or small, both are forms of the same water."

Devotee: "Hanuman did not agree with this view. He declared that his Rama was the Supreme Godhead."

Papa: "Hanuman also said that as Atman he and Rama were one; as body, he was the servant or das of Rama."

Devotee: "In the idea of oneness, can there be dasabhava? Are they not contradicting each other?"

Papa: "It appears contradictory but it is possible."

Devotee: "That attitude may be purely based on faith or belief."

Papa: "Belief cannot be applied to the highest Truth. Intellect and heart do not reach there."

265.

**Grace and
Karma**

Devotee: "Swami, how can grace work when the law of karma is in force?"

Papa: "Ah, that is the point which Ramdas wanted to explain sometime ago. If karma theory is all in all, grace has no part to play in your life and everything will have to happen as determined by karma. God has nothing to do in the shaping of your life. As in Buddha's teachings, God is severely kept out of your life and you have to work out your own destiny. By doing good acts you get good results, by bad acts bad results. The cycle goes on and on and God has no place in your life. It is by living a righteous life alone you evolve. But if you take God as a force that aids you in your spiritual evolution, then you need His grace. You do bad actions and consequently suffer. Again you do bad actions and again suffer. There must be some force active in you that must help you in your upward progress. Left to yourselves, you may be doing the same wrong action over and over again and go on suffering as a result of it. Some great power within you must turn you from the wrong path, and that power comes to you when you pray to the divine for rescue. That is grace. Your mind is turned to the right path by this grace.

"A devotee has composed a beautiful song. 'O God, are you a dealer in goods? You say if we only do japa and tapa for long years you will give us darshan. If we labour hard for your realisation and get it, this is not grace. Then your darshan is the wages we get for our hard toil. Do you call it grace? It is then our right to claim your darshan after having done sadhana. If you are really gracious, you must raise and save me without my doing any sadhana. Then I won't call it a barter or bargain and you, a shopkeeper.

"So grace comes only when we know we can do nothing to attain Him, but leave all things to Him in utter surrender. In fact by His grace alone we repeat His name and do sadhana to have Him. The moment our mind is turned towards Him we may be sure that grace has come to us. This happens in the company of a saint. Many who are living a life fully immersed in worldly enjoyments are suddenly awakened to the higher life. Surely this awakening takes place by the contact of a great soul, a saint whose life has been transformed by grace. Karma by itself cannot liberate us."

Devotee: "If there is grace, why should it not liberate us immediately? Why should we have to take to all these difficult paths?"

266. Papa: "In the ultimate analysis Ramdas can say the sadhaka is He, the saddhya is He. He is having a play of 'hide and seek.' He is seeking Himself, and even though He can discover Himself at once, He purposely delays. Suppose some children play the game of 'hide and seek'. The one who tries to find out the one in hiding, though he knows where he is, pretends that he does not know, searches in places

where he is not and prolongs the game, and at last comes to the place where the other is and shouts he has found him. Such is the play between the devotee and God—who are after all one and the same.”

267. Devotee : “Papa, you say that the path of surrender is the easiest.
Love, the I say it is the most difficult.”
easiest path

Papa : “Through utter love for God, we can attain the state of surrender. Love is not to be learnt by taking lessons. It is our nature from childhood. As children we first love our mother, later we love so many other objects of the world. The only thing we have to do is to make God the object of our love.”

Devotee : “That is the most difficult thing to do.”

Papa : “That is truly the easiest path. All other paths are hard and difficult. By constant repetition of His name you can love Him and finally surrender to Him.”

Devotee : “When I repeat Ramnam, I remember Rama as the one who was weeping for Sita, or as the one who killed Vali, and it does not produce any good effect on me.”

Papa : “Do not have such ideas. Ram is at the same time the highest Truth—all-pervading, all-loving and all-merciful. When Ramdas repeated Ramnam he found it to be very effective.”

268. Devotee : “When I repeat the Name what should I think as the
Concentrate object of the Name ; what form?”
on the Name

Papa : “No form is necessary. You may concentrate on the sound and see that in a short time your mind becomes fully concentrated and still.”

Devotee : “There must be some object for the Name.”

Papa : “The Name itself is the object. If you repeat OM, what object can you bring before the mind? OM is the absolute Truth. So the Name also is He. Name is God.”

Devotee : “There is no mention of Ramnam in the earlier Upanishads. And if it is the name of Dasaratha Rama, then he is also not considered as the Supreme Being by many. How can we then consider that Ramnam is all-powerful?”

Papa : "Don't you know that Valmiki himself repeated Ramnam ?"

Devotee : "There are instances mentioned to say that Valmiki never led a bad life whereas it is generally said that he was a kinnara. If he was a kinnara, he would have made some reference to that in *the Ramayana*. But he has not. And it is also said *the Ramayana* was written before Dasaratha Rama was born. It was a story from the pure imagination of the poet-saint."

Papa : "Whatever the puranas may say, and whoever may have written the story, Ramdas can vouch that Ramnam has the power to take one to the peak of spiritual experience. Ramdas himself repeated Ramnam and concentrated his mind upon it. He considered Ramnam as the symbol of the highest Truth and it has taken him to It. Ramdas speaks with authority because he has experienced its wonderful power. You must have faith in the power of the Name. You can test for yourself how it acts upon your vasanas and how it gradually eradicates them completely. Even a serpent that is moving about with its hood raised, however violent it may be, lowers its hood and becomes very quiet as soon as the snake-charmer plays on his pipe. So also, when your mind listens to Ramnam, it acts like a snake-charmer's pipe on the cobra of your mind. The mind becomes calm and quiet. Ultimately all vasanas are completely rooted out."

November 9, 1953

269. 10-30 a.m. Satyanarayana Rao's house. Two devotees of Hindupur
Intensify were sitting in front of Papa holding his feet. One of them was a
sadhana veterinary doctor, Sitaram Sastry, and the other a merchant. Sitaram
 Sastry appeared completely overcome by emotion, tears flowing
down his cheeks. As it was time for Papa's shave and bath, S. was about to call him to the adjoining room. But seeing Papa talking very lovingly and seriously to the veterinary doctor, keeping the right hand on his back and the left hand on the other devotee sitting on Papa's left, S. did not feel like disturbing Papa, but stood near him, hearing the holy conversation.

Papa : "Don't be dispirited. Give yourself up entirely to Him and once for all be free. Have no doubts or misgivings. The divine is within you. Think of Him constantly. Don't be subject to dejection and depression. Intensify your sadhana. Then alone you can withstand the temptations of the world. When you are down-hearted, think of Ramdas's smiling face and you will immediately be elevated. When Ramdas was doing sadhana he had none to give him advice like this. He had to look out for himself. He had to face all the obstacles to sadhana and overcome them by the grace of God within. Mostly he was then in solitude. Whenever he had an occasion to have darshan of a saint, he simply prostrated before him and sat silent in front of him. He felt the saint was inwardly directing him to go into solitude. And he liked it too.

"The vasanas do not leave us suddenly. Divine power, when it acts in us, can alone completely destroy vasanas. They are like the six heads of the serpent Kaliya. The heads are kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya. This serpent can be subdued only by Krishna—the Supreme Being. When light comes, darkness disappears. So, when the divine reveals Himself in you, all the vasanas automatically disappear.

"In the state of our ignorance we are subject to three gunas. When we transcend these gunas we realise God. Thereafter, instead of remaining in the three gunas we will abide in Sat-chit-ananda."

Looking at S. standing there for sometime, Papa asked if bath was ready.

S: "Papa is to have a shave today."

Papa: "Ah, Ramdas forgot all about it."

Papa then went to the adjoining room to have his shave.

Papa: "The water is cold."

S: "I shall bring hot water again. I had kept it very hot before I came to call you there. But you were engaged in a serious talk. I did not like to disturb you and so stood there quietly listening to your talk. In the meantime the water became cold."

Mataji: "I was wondering why S. who went to call you took so long to return."

Papa: "Ramdas saw S. standing. But he did not feel like breaking the conversation half-way."

Mataji was very happy to see Papa seriously instructing earnest, attentive aspirants.

XXXI

Anantapur, November 9, 1953

270. 2 p.m. Satyanarayana Rao's house. It was the time fixed for questions and answers.
- Meditation must accompany fasting** A devotee: "It is said in *the Bhagavad Gita* that even if the senses are kept under control by starving them, the desire for sense-enjoyment persists and will disappear only after the realisation of the Supreme."

Papa: "Is it physical fasting or fasting of the senses? Even physical fasting helps to a great extent in controlling the senses. Fasting makes the senses weak. That is the best time for meditation. Mere fasting will not help you in destroying the sense-desires. Fasting must be accompanied by deep meditation.

"Ramdas used to fast. But his fasts were, in a sense, feasts. Whenever Ram commanded him to go on a fast, he felt very jubilant as if he was going to have a feast. During the fast he was in a state of bliss, as his mind used to lose itself in the divine. At that time, repetition of the Name would stop and he used to be in a state of ecstasy. He was never troubled with hunger while fasting.

"All cannot fast this way. Some people, while fasting, instead of remembering God, remember food. The thought of laddus and other sweets will be revolving in their minds. It is because they have not yet experienced the taste of the divine sweetness within them. If they once taste it, even though for a short time, they will never divert their minds towards sense-objects."

271. Devotee: "Why not Swamiji bless us with that bliss at least for one moment, so that our minds may always be attuned to it?"
- The inner joy manifests in saint's presence** Papa: "It is for that very purpose that Ramdas has come here.

Those who are ready and prepared to receive it shall certainly have it. The joy that you get in the company of saints is not the joy that the saint gives you but that which manifests from within you. In the presence of the saint, the

flood-gates of joy within you open out and you seem to swim in it. You have noticed the lotus buds blossoming beautifully, giving out all their fragrance, at dawn. The sun is only an ostensible cause for the buds to flower. Nothing new, that was not already inherent in the bud, came out. So also, in the presence of saints, the hidden joy within you reveals itself. This is not the case with all the people who come near the saint. They alone who are ready can derive benefit when they contact a saint. You are all lotuses."

Devotee : "Why do we not remain in that joy for ever?"

Papa : "Why don't you allow the bud to grow and open out before the sun?"

272. Devotee : "Is it not a fact that only heroes can walk on the path
Path of of renunciation?"
renunciation—
only for Papa : "The path is meant only for heroes and not for cowards, as
heroes. a saint says."

Devotee : "How can a man who is stricken with poverty become courageous enough to walk on the path?"

Papa : "Poverty is a blessing to him on the path. Some voluntarily accept poverty. They reduce themselves to that state, because they can thereby realise God quicker. The badge of all saints and sages is poverty."

Devotee : "Poverty makes people bad."

Papa : "Wealth makes them worse."

Devotee : "Can't poverty be eliminated from the State by a proper Government?"

Papa : "Government is doing so, levying more taxes on the rich, such as income-tax, estate duty, death duty and so on. Wealth in the country will, in course of time, be equally distributed."

Devotee : "Why is Swamiji not advising maharajas to distribute their wealth to the poor?"

Papa : "The maharajas whom Ramdas met have been losing gradually everything they possessed. They have lost their power and position, and get on with the allowance paid by the Central government. Many of them have actually become poor. Ramdas's business is only to make everybody spiritually rich."

Devotee: "How far is man free to act and how does the law of karma affect him?"

Papa: "Man is responsible for his actions so long as he has the ego-sense in him. As soon as he is free from the ego-sense, God starts acting in him. As long as he thinks he is responsible for his actions, he is in the clutches of karma. He has to move in that vicious circle of good and bad actions and reap the results."

273. Devotee: "Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna suffered from cancer and
Vicarious Sri Ramana from sarcoma. Why should they have suffered like that?"
suffering of
saints

Papa: "Sri Ramakrishna was asked this question. He replied that he took over the *prarabdhas* of those who came to prostrate before him. He took upon himself their diseases and karmic effects and relieved them of their suffering. That is the only reason why they had to suffer. This is called vicarious suffering. This sort of suffering goes on even in regard to ordinary men. Suppose a man is suffering on account of extreme poverty. Another, a rich man, takes pity on him and gives his all to him. Thereby he himself suffers in order to relieve the other from suffering."

Devotee: "How is it possible to take the suffering from others?"

Papa: "Saints know the way. What happens, only they know."

Devotee: "Most of us are very anxious to transfer our troubles but there are none to take over."

Papa: "It is a very convenient idea. But very often we say we give, but do not give. There must be power on the other side to receive and also power on our side to give."

Devotee: "Should we pray to God for material things? Does He not know what He has to give us?"

Papa: "One devotee prayed like this and Ramdas thinks that it is the best form of prayer. He said, 'O God, I am foolish. You are wise. I ask unwisely for so many things. Kindly do not grant them. Give me what is best in your view. In my foolishness I may ask for things which, if granted, may bring harm to me.'

"Kunti Devi prayed to Lord Krishna to give her more and more suffering as then only she would remember Him. But what do we do? When difficulties come, we find fault with God. We ask Him, 'I have been so long taking your Name. What is the

meaning of your bringing difficulties to me?' And then we stop taking the Name altogether. This is not the way the devotees should behave. If they change their attitude, they can turn the very difficulties into help on their path.

"There was a devotee who was for thirty years repeating Ramnam. He lost one of his children. He was overpowered so much by grief that he gave up Ramnam altogether and started abusing God for having taken away his child, even though he had been His devotee for so many years. He became very restless. Thus he spent some days in grief. His friends advised him to go to Ramdas. He knew that Ramdas would ask him to take to Ramnam, which he did not want to. Finally he did come to Ramdas. Ramdas told him, 'When your mind is not at rest, the only way to make it calm is to think of God. What will happen to you if you go on like this without taking His name, but abusing Him? God is absolute peace and bliss. To think of Him means to rest in peace. And you are yourself blocking the way to that peace, because your child passed away. Did you bring the child with you when you came into the world? Are you going to take it with you when you depart from this life? Why do you then go mad like this at the loss of it?' Ramdas allowed these thoughts to sink in his mind. In another fifteen minutes he started singing God's name, became cheerful, went back home, reopened his business and spent a happy life thereafter."

274. Papa's programmes were tight; they came one after another in quick succession, and devotees were pouring in at all hours of the day, till late in the night. Seeing this, Janakiram remarked: "Papa, **Sadhuism is no joke** to be a Mahatma is no small job. There is no end to our trying his patience. How we bother you!"

Papa: "Sadhuism is not a joke. Ramdas does not consider such a life serious. He takes it very light. If he took it serious he would not be what he is."

Before coming to Anantapur, Papa had decided not to visit houses or go to any other nearby village. All the devotees were accordingly informed.

The municipal chairman had been sending his car for Papa's use from the day of Papa's arrival. The previous day, a friend on behalf of the chairman requested Papa to visit his house and wished to know if Papa would kindly make an exception in his case. When the matter came before Papa, he said, "Ramdas cannot make an exception. He has been telling all devotees that he won't go to anybody's house. If he breaks the rule in this case, it will cause great distress to other devotees. Ramdas is not prepared to disappoint hundreds of people just to satisfy one. Please therefore request him to excuse Ramdas."

November 10, 1953

275. 7 a.m. The municipal chairman came with his family and performed
Pada-pooja Papa's pada-pooja at Satyanarayana's house. From 7 to 8-15 a.m. a
 number of devotees also performed pada-poojas mostly in the
orthodox style. Some of them placed their offerings, in coins, at Papa's feet.
Later they were taken and handed over to Papa who put them in the pockets on
either side. Consequently the pockets became heavy. After pooja Papa got up and
went to the small room where coffee was kept ready for him.

On getting up, feeling his pockets heavy, Papa remarked: "Ramdas is heavy
on both sides."

S: "Are the sides balancing, Papa?"

Papa: "They have been made to balance. Now let the money come out. Take
Ramdas's purse and the bag. Ramdas has been going about like John Gilpin who hung
two wine bottles, on either side, from his belt!"

276. 10-30 a.m. A few devotees were sitting with Papa. One of them
Disrespect was working in Kurnool (then capital of Andhra). He was talking to
to saints Papa about the new capital and the scorpions that infested the place.

Papa (*to the Kurnool devotee*): "Do you go to see our friend R. R. there?"

Devotee: "Yes, he is there. When I knew your programme I went to him to
tell him that I was going to see you. I was terribly disappointed. I felt I should not
have gone at all to see him."

Papa: "What was the matter?"

Devotee: "He is somehow against saints now. He asked me, 'Why should
you go and worship Ramdas? God alone is the one we should worship. These
people are all on the way still. I do not like to worship these people. I am not
permitting anybody to worship me. I do not like thousands of people following me.'
These were the words I heard from him."

Papa: "Oh, has he advanced so much?"

Devotee: "At last he told me that I should not mention his name to Papa."

S: "You may tell him when you meet him next that Papa himself enquired
of him."

Papa: "We cannot build up a spiritual structure on the foundation of abusing saints. By such abuse we do not do good to ourselves, but we pull ourselves down. Many years ago when R. R. came to the ashram, he asked Ramdas whether he could continue his legal practice and yet progress on the spiritual path. Ramdas frankly told him, if one had to resort to telling lies in whatever profession he might be, he would not advance on the spiritual path. But R.R. was of the opinion that without telling lies he could not practise as a lawyer. Ramdas finally told him that whether he practised or not, if he wanted spiritual advancement he must stop telling lies. Ramdas heard that after he had returned to his place, he discontinued his practice as a lawyer and took seriously to spiritual sadhana. He had no children then. But recently we heard that a son was born to him."

S: "Did he fall out with any saint? Had he any trouble with saints?"

Papa: "He had a very bad experience with Swami Nityananda. As soon as he went near him, Nityananda gave him a hard blow on the knee-cap, flinging at him a stone or a cocoanut and it appears he was in bed for some days on that account. But that may not be the reason for his present attitude."

In the evening at 4-30, Papa visited the Sai Baba High School, where the students were seated in perfect order. Papa sat on a raised and decorated platform. Papa spent about half an hour there, while some girl students sang devotional songs and the correspondent, Sri Adinarayana Rao, made a short speech. Before he started to speak, he requested Papa to address the students but Papa excused himself. From the school, Papa went for his usual evening walk.

277. Crowds began gathering at the residence of Satyanarayana Rao from 5 p.m. for the bhajan which was to start only at 6-30. By that time there was quite a good crowd in the pandal erected for the bhajan. Later the pandal had overflowed, and the whole compound was full of people and there was also not an inch of space inside the house. The bhajan which was started could not be orderly owing to the indisciplined crowd. To add to the confusion, in the middle of the bhajan, the electric lights went off and all had to sit in the darkness for some time.

In spite of the dense crowd, the disorder and the noise that ensued, and even when the lights were off, Papa was sitting with his usual serenity and smile and was cracking jokes.

The electric line was set right and the bhajan resumed but the noise from the crowd continued. So the convener friends requested the devotees assembled there to prostrate before Papa and leave the place. It took more than fortyfive minutes for all of them to prostrate and disperse.

When the lights went off, Mataji was in her room and a large number of women were crowding around her. Many had their children with them, who began to cry. Not caring for the children, the women were only anxious to prostrate before Mataji. Seeing the situation, Mataji went out of the room to the veranda and stood there so as to avoid congestion.

The whole programme was over by 9 p.m. Papa had been sitting for two hours and a half at a stretch. When Papa came to his room, S. asked him how he managed to sit so long.

Papa : "Ramdas had to."

Venkatesan : "Tomorrow we cannot have this privilege."

Papa : "If Ramdas sits for such long programmes, his body will be shattered. If you cannot have the privilege tomorrow, Bangalore people will have it. If, due to overstrain, Ramdas takes ill, nobody will have the privilege. What a rush it was!"

Papa wanted to rest. As he was having a touch of cold, K. R. Rama Rao was sent for to get some homeopathic remedies.

En route from Anantapur to Bangalore. November 11, 1953

278. Satyanarayana Rao's house. Papa was to leave Anantapur for Bangalore. From early morning devotees were pouring in for darshan. The party was ready to start at 10 o'clock. Everybody present was sad at heart at Papa's impending departure. As the time was nearing, the pressure of grief in their hearts seemed to increase. Their eyes were filled with tears and words could not find their way out of their choked throats.

Papa : "Ramdas also feels like weeping when he sees you all so much moved."

Rama Rao : "Is Papa also moved?"

Papa : "Why should he not be moved? Is he a rock? You people are capable of even melting rocks."

News came that the train would arrive late by an hour.

Papa then told the devotees : "Now you can sit at ease. We are here for an hour more."

All the same the inevitable hour of leave-taking came and Papa left the house at 11-15 a.m. The train left Anantapur a few minutes before 12 noon.

As there were already three passengers in the compartment, Papa did not have enough space for his afternoon rest.

S: "Papa can sleep on the lower berth. I shall request that gentleman to occupy the other seat and make space for Papa."

Papa: "No, Ramdas may not sleep. Let that friend sit where he is."

Mataji: "Why not on the upper berth, Papa?"

S: "Papa may find it difficult to climb up."

Papa: "No, Ramdas won't mind it. He can climb up."

Then S. spread Papa's bed on the upper berth and Papa climbed up, not without difficulty, and sat on his bed. With a triumphant smile he said, "See how Ramdas managed to climb up!"

279. He had hardly slept fifteen minutes when the train reached
Crowds en Dharmavaram station. Papa was not known to many in Dharmavaram.
route But the news of his visit to Anantapur, stay there for over a week and the planned departure on the 11th, had spread in all parts of the district. So a huge crowd was waiting at the platform. Within a minute after the train had stopped, Papa woke up and descended to the platform.

As a large number of women were sitting in an orderly manner on an adjacent platform, Papa was taken through the crowd to that platform. The moment Papa took his seat on a chair there, the orderly crowd became restive. At first the women rushed forward to prostrate before Papa, while the men were standing on one side. Many old women and children fell down and were trampled upon by others. This scene went on for five to ten minutes. Now the men also began to rush forward for pranam as they thought the train was about to start. They pushed the women away. Soon the stationmaster led Papa to the compartment and in another minute the train whistled off.

While Papa was on the platform, Mataji remained in the train and a crowd of women-devotees gathered around her. When she was engaged with them, a monkey came from behind and took away some packets from a handbag that was kept on the seat. Timely intervention by the fellow-passengers prevented the monkey from getting away with the things. They were dropped outside, and later recovered. Mataji was anxious about Papa's dentures, which were in the bag. On examination they were found intact at the bottom of the bag.

The next scene was at Penukonda. The platform was nearly full of devotees headed by Janakiram. They were all waiting for Papa's darshan. Janakiram requested Papa and Mataji to get down and occupy the chairs kept for them in the centre of a large group of people, male and female, all sitting in regular order. Papa and Mataji took their seats and the next minute confusion followed. In their rush to make pranam they pushed the weaker ones aside and trampled upon those who fell down. Papa watched the scene for a minute. He could not suffer to see children and old women being stepped upon by sturdy young men and grown-up school-boys. He got up from the seat, asked Mataji to follow, and literally fought his way through the crowd back to the compartment. When they both got back safely, Janakiram also followed them.

Papa (to Janakiram): "Your crowd is uncontrollable. You made a mistake in asking us to get down when you could not control the crowd."

Janakiram: "Papa, they do not obey me. They are carried away by emotion and nothing could stop them."

None was allowed inside the compartment for sometime. Later they started pushing their way in. The compartment was full and there was many a skirmish at the doorstep. By this time the hits and knocks received from the bowing heads of devotees had begun to give pain to Papa's feet, especially the toes with in-growing nails. Papa then sat up on the seat with crossed legs in such a way that the feet were not exposed. But the women-devotees who were crowding the compartment caught hold of Papa's feet from either side, pulled them out and placed their heads on them. Papa, however, submitted and kept the feet out as long as they wanted, without any further resistance; but he desired that no more persons should be permitted inside the compartment after those that came in had cleared out. Mataji stood at the entrance and hundreds of devotees placed their heads on her feet—in a manner far from orderly or peaceful. When this was going on, Papa, who was quietly watching the game from behind, remarked: "These people will break Mataji's feet. They have done enough with Ramdas." A few minutes before the train left, Mataji kindly requested Papa to come near the door and shower his gracious glance on the crowd. Papa did so and received some more knocks on his toes. Everything was calm when the train gained speed leaving thousands of devotees on the platform to find their way back home. Papa took his seat with so much joy as if he had just escaped from a severe storm. He could enjoy this well-earned rest only for about an hour as Hindupur was nearing. The experience at Penukonda made Papa decide not to get out of the compartment at Hindupur.

At Hindupur station, as soon as the door of the compartment was opened, Papa and Mataji stood at the entrance facing the disorderly crowd, and refused to get down. The devotees began to prostrate and offer fruits and garlands to them. As soon as a garland was put, Papa took it out and threw it in the air and there were hundreds of hands raised to catch it. The fruits were also distributed at random then

and there. After standing at the door for about ten minutes, Papa got back to his seat, and a few from the crowd entered the compartment. One young man, overpowered by emotion, came running to Papa with his mouth fully open and bent down as if he was going to devour his feet. By the will of the all-merciful Ram, he just left Papa's feet safe after licking them to his heart's content.

Nanjunda Sastri of Manepalli, who was with Papa at Anantapur and who followed him to this station, was of immense help in protecting Papa from the huge and unruly crowd of devotees. He always stood at Papa's side. While writing about Sastri, his great love for Papa as well as his devoted service need special mention.

Sastri had his own unique way of doing things. One thing made Mataji laugh daily and it became a standing joke. When the singing of Ramnam in chorus was going on by a large number of devotees and it was found necessary to stop it for some reason or other, he would shout out 'o-o-o-o-M,' and this always served as a brake. Whenever Mataji heard him saying 'o-o-o-o-M,' she used to roar with laughter; and later, even in the absence of Mataji, all others would laugh remembering Mataji's reaction to it.

It was getting dark and the train was nearing Bangalore. Though it started nearly an hour late, it had made up the time and it was expected that the train would arrive at Bangalore only about thirty minutes late. Gajendra was waiting at Yeshwantpur, a station prior to Bangalore, and he joined the party. In the course of his random talk he made mention of P. S. Gopal Rao.

Gajendra (to Papa) : "After you had left Bangalore last week, Gopal Rao went to Conjeevaram to have darshan of Sri Sankaracharya. Papa, wherever he goes he is after relics. From Udipi he even took a wooden plank used by Madhvacharya. Now he is trying his best to see that Papa visits Madras. He has asked me to persuade Papa somehow to decide in favour of the visit. I, of course, replied, 'Whatever Papa decides is final. He cannot be persuaded to change his plans'."

Papa : "You are Gajendra. If you get yourself caught by a crocodile in the Bay of Bengal and cry for help, Ramdas will come there."

Gajendra : "There are no crocodiles in the Bay of Bengal."

Papa : "There are other equally ferocious and dangerous marine animals."

Gajendra : "Oh ! Gopal Rao, when he knows this, will himself act as the crocodile so that Papa may come to Madras."

S : "Let him not forget the fate that overtook the crocodile."

Papa : "It was cut into pieces but it also got moksha, as Gajendra did. But Ramdas wants them to get moksha while living in the body. Moksha after the body drops is a different thing."

XXXII

Bangalore, November 11, 1953

280. 8 p.m. The train arrived at Bangalore station. Sarangapani
Back in Mudaliar and his sons, Narasimha Rao Naidu and his family, and a
Bangalore few others were waiting at the platform. After the party had got
down and the luggage unloaded, the whole group walked to the
car waiting outside.

S : "This is a very long platform."

Papa : "Ramdas could not have his usual evening walk. Now he can have it."

Narasimha Rao Naidu : "I have a telegram from Hanumayamma to say that she
is coming in the night for Papa's darshan."

Papa : "Is she coming? Did she get a tenant for her house? She has been
sending letters and telegrams for blessings. There is no end to the blessings she
asks for."

The party proceeded to Sarangapani Mudaliar's residence where his wife,
daughter, son (Ranganathan) and a few other devotees greeted Papa. Papa was
happy to see Ranganathan back from the hospital and restored to normal health. He
was seriously ill on the day Papa arrived the previous week and Papa had gone to see
him at the hospital. When he prostrated before Papa, Papa said, "Ranganathan I Oh,
you are so active and smart as if you were never ill!"

November 12, 1953

281. 5 p.m. Sarangapani Mudaliar's residence. Some devotees had
Everything is gathered in Papa's room. Subbaiyer, Narasimha Rao Naidu,
God's work Ramachandra Rao, Gajendra, S. and some others were on one side.
Mataji and a few women were on the other side of Papa. Looking at
S. who was writing something, Subbaiyer asked him what he was writing. Papa then
told Subbaiyer, "He is taking down some notes."

Subbaiyer : "He is doing God's work."

Papa : "What is not God's work?"

Subbaiyer : "Anything that is done with the remembrance of God and as a dedication to Him is God's work ; and also whatever is done as prompted by God."

Papa : "Everything is God's work, because God alone prompts all actions."

Subbaiyer : "But actions of those whose lives are completely dedicated to God are different from those of ordinary men. S. is wearing the badge of renunciation, the ochre cloth."

282. A devotee : "Papa, what does the ochre colour actually denote?"

**Colours—
what they
signify**

Papa : "Sannyasis put on ochre cloth, Buddhist monks put on yellow cloth. Ochre colour is a mixture of yellow and red, with more of red in it. That is the colour of fire. If a sannyasi is seen at a distance, from the cloth you make out that the desires of his lower nature are aflame. If a Buddhist monk wearing yellow cloth is coming, you understand that even as the dead body is yellow in colour, the monk is dead to the world, that is his desires are all dead."

A devotee : "What does white cloth indicate?"

Papa : "It indicates purity."

283. A devotee : "There are some naked sadhus also. Even now there is one at Chidambaram."
**Nakedness of
the Soul**

Subbaiyer : "I have seen one moving about like a child. He must be completely above body-consciousness."

A devotee : "Otherwise how can they remain naked?"

S : "There was a great avadhuta saint near Salem."

Gajendra : "Yes, he was called Sendamangalam Swamigal. It is his disciple who is now at Chidambaram."

Papa : "Have you heard of one Balasubramaniam? He was a professor in a college ; a short, stout and fair-looking young man. He got initiation from Sendamangalam Swamigal and is wandering about naked somewhere. Nakedness

must be of the soul, not merely outside. This friend Balasubramaniam wrote to Ramdas that though he was naked outside he had yet to become naked within. He was frank and confessed his condition. Ramdas advised him that having taken to this path he must carry on, not retract. Finally he is sure to have the inner nakedness also."

284. Subbaiyer : "If such people do not realise God, can we, who eat
Wait in hope and make merry, attain Him?"
for grace

Papa : "A man attains God when His grace descends on him, wherever he may be and whatever way he lives. Whether he wanders about as a naked sadhu or lives an ordinary life in the world, when God's grace comes, he is liberated."

Subbaiyer : "That is the excuse for us all to live this life of comfort and say, 'I will reach Him when His grace comes'."

Papa : "Otherwise what do you expect an aspirant to do? He struggles hard and does not realise Him. Let him not kick against the pricks, but wait, calm and serene, for His grace to transform him once for all. Why should he fret and fume? Ramdas does not say that he must entirely give up effort to attain God. He must make intense effort, but his dissatisfaction and internal fight must stop. If he goes on struggling, God does not come. We churn the curd for sometime and then leave it to settle down for butter to form. In the same way, he must learn to wait patiently. God comes in good time. By grumbling he puts off His coming. Grumblers cannot have Him; in other words, He is far away from grumblers.

"You have heard the story of Sabari. She knew Rama would come to her, but did not know when. Everyday she was busy preparing to receive Him and what a joy she had in the very expectation of Rama's arrival! Though Rama did not come for years, hope kept her throughout in a state of joy. If this type of joy is not there in the expectation of God's coming, life becomes simply unbearable."

285. Papa continued : "Do you know why Sabari could do it? Because
Have ananya she was not learned. Our fault is that we are learned and so we are
bhakti like 'Doubting Thomas'."

Subbaiyer : "Papa, does He not know that we are thinking of Him constantly?"

Papa : "Where is that man who is thinking of Him constantly? Let Ramdas see him."

Subbaiyer : I am, Papa."

Papa : "If you have been thinking of Him always, you must have become one with Him. There cannot be any doubt about it. The thinker and the thought become one. To think continuously of Him means to be rid of the ego-sense. The sloka "Ananyaschintayantomam. . . ." means that we should accept Him completely and entertain no other thought. This exclusive thought of God grants one always great joy. Such a one deserves to attain Him and gets Him."

286. A young man in the group, who was so far sitting quietly, came
An Initiation near Papa and said, "Swamiji, will you kindly give me
mantropadesa?"

Papa : "Why do you want initiation?"

Young man : "Because I want peace. You gave initiation to a teacher this morning and what he told Papa is the same that I have to say."

Papa : "That teacher has become the mouthpiece of thousands. Are you keen on having the mantra?"

Young man : "Very keen on having it from Ramdas himself."

Papa : "Where is Ramdas?"

Young man : Sitting before me."

Papa : "Is he simply Ramdas or Swami Ramdas?"

(No reply)

Young man : "You had asked me to lead a righteous life. And by taking initiation of the mantra, I am sure I will be better."

Papa : "All right, come near. Repeat what Ramdas says."

Papa then uttered Ramnam thrice and the young man repeated it.

Gajendra : "Papa, he is a good musician."

Papa : "Go on singing Ramnam in a fine tune for yourself and also for others."

A devotee : "Should the Guru mantra be kept a secret?"

Papa : "You need not make a secret of it."

Subbaiyer : "When Papa repeats the mantra, there is no humour or smile seen in Papa's face. At other times Papa is smiling. Papa is serene at the time of repeating the mantra."

Papa : "Ramdas does not know. When he gives mantra initiation to anybody next time, please keep a mirror before him so that he can see how he looks."

The new friend who got initiation started singing a song.

Papa : "No songs. Sing only *Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram* now in a good tune."

287. Unlike the previous night a large number of devotees kept pouring
A devotee's in. Bhajan continued and devotees were not leaving though it was
confession past nine at night. Narasimha Rao Naidu prostrated before Papa,
 saying, "Papa, we are going. We shall come early in the morning.
We may not be able to come to the aerodrome as it is too chill."

Papa : "All right. Go soon. Your health is not very good."

Narasimha Rao Naidu went out and in a few minutes came back and stood before Papa. Papa saw him and said, "You just went out. How is it you have come back?"

Narasimha Rao Naidu : "The thought of your departure tomorrow is weighing on our mind. We have been only enjoying good meals and other comforts. We cannot honestly say that we are following Papa's teachings and are advancing on the path. I know, Papa, that we are giving you a lot of trouble. Of course, Sri Ramakrishna told one of his devotees that he had not come only to eat rasagullas and live comfortably. So also we know, in your infinite compassion and love for us, you won't mind our bothering you, but we do feel sometimes that we give you little rest."

November 13, 1953

288. Papa got up at 4-45 a.m. as the party had to be ready to leave
A bright Sarangapani Mudaliar's house by 6-15. Packing had to be done and
future awaits it took a little time. At about 5-30, Narasimha Rao Naidu and his
India family and a few other devotees came and were with Papa.

The plane carrying Papa, Mataji and S. to Hyderabad took off from the Bangalore airport at 7 a.m.

Hyderabad, November 13, 1953

Rani Lalitha Devi and a number of other devotees were awaiting the arrival of Papa and party at the Hyderabad aerodrome. The plane landed at 9 a.m. When they came out of the plane, Papa and Mataji were profusely garlanded by the devotees. After sitting in the waiting room for a few minutes, the party drove to the residence of Rani Lalitha Devi at Khairatabad.

A few minutes before 2 p.m., Sri Baldoon Dhingra, an officer of the Education Department of the UNESCO, came with a friend. There were none else in Papa's room except S. He explained to Papa how the UNESCO was useful to the world and so on.

Papa : "Has it been successful in bringing about peace and harmony in the world?"

Dhingra : "I cannot say how far it has contributed towards bringing about peace and harmony. That you must know better. It is working for the furtherance of science and education all over the world and of cultural relations among different nations."

Papa : "It is doing splendid work, though it has not yet achieved what we expected of it."

Dhingra : "My problem now is whether I should continue there or serve in India itself."

Papa : "You must continue where you now are. God has placed you in that position. A really good man in an organisation can influence all the rest."

Dhingra : "Who is to decide whether I am good or not?"

Papa : "Ramdas sees good only in everything. If everyone in the world sends forth a good thought, there will be such peace and harmony that there will be no possibility of a war. And India has an important part to play in this great task."

Dhingra : "Then why is it, Swamiji, that people are feeling a sense of frustration in India now?"

Papa : "Because this is the transition period. Ramdas envisages a bright future for India."

Dhingra : "I am still thinking why I should not do my work in India."

Papa : "You carry on with your work there. But if you think you will be able to serve India better by leaving your present work in UNESCO, you will, of course, be justified in leaving it."

289. As many devotees were waiting, Papa got up from his seat. The friends took leave of him, but came again in the evening with Papa's books *Divine Life, In Quest of God* and *Sayings of Ramdas*, and wanted Papa's autograph. The friend who accompanied Sri Dhingra told Papa that he was sending the latter two books to a friend of his, a judge at Amsterdam, as he had enquired of Papa and his writings when they met at Amsterdam.

After Sri Dhingra and his friend had left, Papa remarked : "Do you know why these people come here? When they go to Europe and other places abroad, some people ask them if they have heard of Ramdas. Now they can say they have seen him in flesh and blood and have also read his books."

S : "Exactly so. The friend who came with Dhingra told me that when he was in Europe last, some of his friends asked him if he had seen Swami Ramdas. He was ashamed to reply that he had not even heard of him. That was why he was anxious to get some books and read them."

290. Around 6 p.m., Prof. Krishna Rao and some others were sitting before Papa. Shivmohanlal and Ratnam (of Ramanashram) and another young man with a long beard came in. Shivmohanlal, with his characteristic smile, rushed forward to Papa, prostrated and remained in that position with his head at Papa's feet. Seeing this, Rani Lalitha Devi remarked to Prof. Krishna Rao, "Swamiji's favourite devotee has come."

Krishna Rao : "Who is not Papa's favourite devotee? Everybody is a favourite."

Lalitha Devi : "No. He is a favourite devotee. See how long he prostrates before Papa. I do not do like that."

After Shivmohanlal got up, he introduced to Papa the bearded friend who had accompanied him : "Papa, this saint is from Raichur. He had been to the Himalayas in search of God. He stays in a village near Raichur. He has come on some work to Hyderabad. He stays with me and gives me the joy of his company."

Papa : "You are honey and bees rush to you."

Hearing this, Shivmohanlal fell at Papa's feet again with bubbling joy.

Papa : "How did you get filled with honey ? Where did you get it all from ?"

Shivmohanlal (*again falling at Papa's feet and touching his toes*) : "This is the place I get all the honey from."

Saying this he kissed the toes again and again.

November 14, 1953

291. There were pressing requests from many devotees that Papa should make it convenient to go to their houses. Papa's health did not however permit of his visiting houses as he used to do on his earlier visits. They were, hence, disappointed at Papa's refusal, especially after they knew that Papa had agreed to visit the house of Rani Barkat Rai during *the Gita* recitations on Sunday, and also the residence of Swami Govinda Tirtha (Dattar Swami), who was ill and so could not come to Papa.

**Mataji's
severe
admonition**

Mataji was having breakfast in the company of Prof. Krishna Rao, Mrs. Krishna Rao, Mrs. Damodar Rao, Vasudev Rao Biderkar, M. G. Krishna Rao, Veeraraghavan and a few others. M. G. Krishna Rao, who was one of those disappointed, talked in Kanarese to Prof. Krishna Rao holding him responsible for Papa's refusal to visit their houses and for accepting the invitation from Rani Barkat Rai and for agreeing to go and see Dattar Swami. M. G. Krishna Rao appeared to have lost his temper as he spoke on the subject.

Then the talks turned to Veeraraghavan's sorrow for not receiving a detailed reply from Papa to his long letter in which he had asked for clarification of his doubts.

When M. G. Krishna Rao was talking, Mataji wished to give him a suitable reply, but kept quiet. When Veeraraghavan's point came, she lost her temper and asked Veeraraghavan in particular and others in general : "You say you did not get a long and detailed letter from Papa. But have you so far tried to live up to one word of what Papa has written in his innumerable letters to you or told you in his talks with you ?"

She then said as a hit at M. G. Krishna Rao : "You people worry Papa to come to your house and do not have any consideration for his health. You charge Prof. Krishna Rao with persuading Papa to go to Rani Barkat Rai's house and not to yours. Are you all still entertaining such petty ideas ? What is the benefit that you aim at getting by Papa's contact ? You wish only to make the best of his stay here for your material ends ; to have a car, to flourish in your business and so on. As Papa's health would not permit, he did not go to Hindupur and Penukonda where thousands were anxious to see him. Some of them had to come to Anantapur for his darshan. Papa has come to your place. Instead of taking the real benefit of his stay here, you

try to pick faults and magnify them. If you all behave like this, it will be better that next time we omit Hyderabad from our programme. You will fare better if we keep away from you."

All those present were surprised at the way Mataji talked, and Mrs. Damodar Rao started weeping. Mataji saw that the situation was tense and thought that she might talk more if she continued sitting there. So she went away, and told Papa of what she talked. Papa was in the adjacent room. When others also finished breakfast and came near Papa, Prof. Krishna Rao told Papa how furious Mataji was.

Papa : "Hyderabad devotees are still rajasic. Because they were rajasic, Ramdas asked them to write fourteen lakhs of Ramnam. Even after writing so much they have not become much better."

292. S (to Mataji) : "Papa is to go this evening to Balwantrao Ghaté's place. Do they prepare rotis all right for Papa?"
Women remain loyal to saints Mataji : "I have told them that we would bring rotis."

S : "Why should we prepare rotis so early and carry them from here? Is it not enough if we prepare them after going there? We shall, if necessary, take some wheat-flour with us."

Mataji : "That will be better. As soon as we go there I shall come with you to the kitchen and you can prepare the rotis in no time."

S : "When I go to the kitchen in different places to prepare rotis for Papa, I am surrounded by women everywhere and I have to move with them and talk with them as if I am one among them. I feel I would do well to mingle with them, wearing a saree!"

Mataji : "Yes, you have to move closely with them. Perhaps this has come to you as a sadhana. If you move closely with women, you will gradually develop their character."

S : "Why do you prefer woman's character to man's?"

Mataji : "Women have naturally more love and an attitude of easy surrender. If they come across anything disagreeable or meet with opposition, they easily give in without much of self-assertion. Men assert themselves, and they are so by nature. By this 'giving in' quality of women, they are able to remain loyal to saints to the very last, accepting or ignoring minor differences. I am afraid to stay in the company of men for a long time lest I should develop their qualities."

In the evening Papa was with Balwantrao Ghaté, Sessions Judge, in his house at Secunderabad. There was quite a long bhajan. It was arranged at Ghaté's place for the convenience of the devotees of the locality. Papa and other devotees had their dinner at Ghaté's.

XXXIII

Hyderabad, November 15, 1953

293. Residence of Rani Lalitha Devi. Papa had just finished his
Is God breakfast. Prof. Krishna Rao, M. G. Krishna Rao, Damodar Rao,
whimsical in Vasudeva Rao, Veeraraghavan and a few others were sitting in front
showering of Papa.
grace ?

Prof. K. Rao : "Papa, we are having interesting questions and answers. Yesterday, in the reply to the question about Sai Baba, Papa never mentioned the name of Sai Baba."

S : "It was only a general question. By referring to Sai Baba the questioner was meaning only saints in general."

Papa : "Ramdas talked of only saints in general. He did not want to talk about anybody or about his opinion in particular."

S : "In yesterday's talks about God's grace, you said God showers His grace as a child gives away things. By comparing God to a child, are you not suggesting that He is whimsical and that from His point of view there is no such thing as a deserving or undeserving case ?"

Papa : "That is what the devotees take Him to be, especially when they see that those who do severe and intense sadhana for years together do not get anything, and an apparently undeserving person is suddenly granted inner illumination."

S : "Papa rightly put it as 'apparently undeserving'. It is only in our opinion that he is undeserving."

Papa : "Take the case of Anna (T. Bhavani Shankar Rao). He was regular, systematic and intense in his spiritual practices from the very early age of his life. At that time Ramdas was laughing at him and making fun of him. He would, in those days, tell us that we should pray and remember God. But we took his advice lightly

and did not heed it, When the change came over Ramdas and he became God's ardent devotee, Anna was the first to recognise the conversion. He held Ramdas in great reverence. Then Ramdas wondered what God had worked in him."

294.

Damodar Rao : "Was Papa an atheist in those days?"

**Was Papa an
atheist in
early life?**

Papa : "Yes, he was something like that. He was laughing at those engaged in spiritual disciplines such as japa and pooja. He did not believe in repetition of Ramnam by people who were having mala in hand and at the same time abusing and speaking ill of others. He did not like hypocrites or the God who made them so."

Damodar Rao : "Were worldly worries responsible for taking Papa's mind Godward and was Papa unhappy for fear of losing jobs very often?"

Papa : "No. Ramdas was care-free and independent. Even when he lost a job he did not mind it."

S : "But, just before Papa started repeating Ramnam was there any immediate cause for his vairagya?"

Papa : "He was unhappy because of the great hypocrisy, deception, violence and the consequent suffering he found in the world."

295.

**God reveals
Himself to
Himself**

S : "Papa, our question remains still unanswered. How can we compare God to a child in conferring grace on aspirants?"

Papa : "It is said in *the Upanishads* that He reveals Himself in the hearts of those whom He chooses. On what basis He chooses we do not know. In fact, to whom does He reveal Himself? He reveals Himself to Himself when He chooses. It is all His game. In one He hides Himself and plays the part of an ignorant man, in another He removes the veil and plays the part of a wise one. So He is Himself everything. He is the seeker. He is the sought."

S : "Papa, this solves all problems. This is the answer which leaves no room for any further question."

Papa : "So you got the answer."

**A lady in
trance**

When the morning bhajan was going on, a car brought a woman and a few men. It stopped in front of the bhajan mandir near the shamiana. The woman sitting in the car was in a state of trance and therefore she remained there undisturbed. After some time, when she came out of the trance, she was asked to alight from the car and take her seat in the room in the bhajan mandir.

It was ascertained later that she came from Yadgir and her name was Manikamma. She had been living without food and water for several years. From six months she had been observing silence. She did not allow anybody to touch her as that disturbed her greatly. Those who came with her—they were her followers—were anxious that she should have Papa's darshan and upadesh.

When the bhajan was over, Papa and Mataji were escorted to the room where Manikamma was sitting on a chair. Two chairs were placed by her side. Papa sat on one, and Mataji, prostrating before her and also before Papa, sat on the other. When Manikamma was told that it was Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabai who were before her, she just folded her hands to them, sitting on the chair. She was asked by her followers to write on a slate, which she had, anything she wanted to say to Papa. She wrote down something in Telugu, which one of her followers translated to Papa thus: 'I am very unhappy to see so much cruelty in this world. My prayer is that people may be relieved of their suffering.'

Papa replied in English, which was translated for her into Telugu: "Our mission is to spread Ramnam and bring about peace and harmony in the world."

She was again about to write something on the slate when Papa said there was an engagement for him to attend. Rani Lalitha Devi suggested that she might wait there till 2 o'clock when Papa would be free to see her. She nodded her head in agreement.

Papa then got into the car to go to the residence of Rani Barkat Rai to attend *the Gita* recitations. When the car started, Prof. Krishna Rao, who was sitting in the front seat with Rani Barkat Rai, said: "Papa, so you met that mother. She observes silence, and so did not talk to Papa."

Papa: "That is her will."

Krishna Rao: "Any way, Papa did commune with her."

Papa: "Ramdas is always in communion with you all. He communes with all of you whether you are talking, walking or doing anything else."

Papa again met Manikamma around 2 p.m. Commenting on this second meeting, Papa said : "Ramdas spent ten minutes with her. It is all a confusion. She does not speak and cannot write correctly. And whatever she writes, the interpreters are misinterpreting. First she wrote, it seems, that Ramdas is a realised soul and is all-knowing. Immediately after that, she asked if Ramdas had realised. Later, Ramdas was told that he should give her the mantra. When Ramdas uttered Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, she took down the mantra incorrectly. Finally she wanted to know what she should do. Ramdas advised her to take Ramnam. Her devotees wanted Ramdas to live with her for fifteen days and fast."

A devotee : "Papa, they say she is not taking food or water. Is it possible for one to live as she does?"

Papa : "Ramdas does not think she is fasting, and cannot believe the report."

A devotee : "She is going into trance very often."

Papa : "She may be. One who is struggling or groping on the path and is disgusted with the world may go into such trance in the sadhana stage. But this trance is not the final thing."

297. His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya of the Puri Math who was then camping in Hyderabad, had sent word that he would visit Papa in the evening. He came and sat on the asan specially set for him by the side of Papa. When the Acharya came, Papa was away from his seat to talk to Manikamma. Leaving her, Papa came to the shamiana where the Acharya was sitting. Papa gave him a warm embrace, touched his feet, and then sat near him.

The Acharya requested Papa to talk on something. But Papa, with folded hands, told him that he was only a servant and did not know what to speak. He further prayed that he might be pleased to speak a few words on whatever subject he liked. He agreed and gave a very interesting discourse to the audience about the glory of Ramnam. He impressed upon everybody the importance of taking Ramnam ceaselessly, even during sleep. He suggested that to maintain the thread of remembrance during sleep, one should intensely repeat Ramnam for sometime before going to bed and then sleep with the Name on the lips and remembrance in the mind. While waking up from sleep one must have God-thought and the repetition of the mantra should follow. Before concluding his discourse, he chanted aloud the mantra Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram and made the audience sing it in chorus and finally advised them that to get real benefit of the japa, they must get up early in the morning and do japa regularly for at least an hour and a half daily.

The Acharya was about eighty years of age. His discourse was both inspiring and interesting.

Later, referring to his visit, Papa remarked : "How lucky we are ! Mahatmas are good enough to come and give us darshan here. Today Ramdas was very happy to hear the Acharya talking about Ramnam. Ramdas enjoyed the embrace greatly. His body is as soft as cotton."

November 16, 1953

298. Residence of Rani Lalitha Devi. Papa went out to see Swami
Ramdas, only Govinda Tirtha (Dattar Swami) and returned after spending a few
a child minutes with him. The Swami was unwell, looked pale and had
 changed his clothes from ochre to white.

After lunch, Papa was resting. Rani Lalitha Devi and S. were massaging his body. Mataji was sitting by the side of the cot.

Lalitha Devi : "Papa touched Sankaracharya's feet yesterday."

Papa : "He is a sannyasi and also an elderly person."

Lalitha Devi : "Papa is also a sannyasi and an elderly person."

Papa : "No. Ramdas is only a child and he has every right to prostrate before his father."

Lalitha Devi : "What is your opinion of Sankaracharya ?"

Papa : "He is the father and Ramdas is his child."

S (to Lalitha Devi) : "You cannot extract any such opinion from Papa."

Papa had closed his eyes and was quiet for some time. Heaving a sigh, he opened his eyes and said : "Ramdas has been remembering Ramkishor very much during last two days."

Mataji : "Yes, since yesterday, Papa has been now and then remembering him."

When Veeraraghavan came to fan Papa, Papa said : "Ramdas will give you some work after he gets up. There is a film negative of Ramkishor. You have to get a print."

299. In the afternoon Papa was in the bhajan-mandir for the usual Das and Ram talks. Papa spoke in Hindi.
are one

A devotee : "Is Ramdas still a das of Ram? If so when is he going to be Ram Himself?"

Papa : "Before starting the sadhana, Ramdas did not know who he was. When he started sadhana he became Ram's das. At that time his attitude was that Ram and das were different. Later he realised that das and Ram were one. Even after realising this, the dasabhava still remains, though it is Ram alone who is playing the part of das. This means that Ramdas is Ram and also His das. Can you understand now?"

Till the previous day Papa was talking in English. It was only that day that he began to speak in Hindi. After giving the above answer to the devotee, he said : "Is Ramdas speaking Hindi all right? Though he was speaking Hindi in North India the previous year, he had not correctly learnt it. Now he has had some study of the language."

Mrs. Damodar Rao : "Papa, so many teachers sitting before you will teach you Hindi. So many gurus for Papa!"

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas will remain a humble disciple of all the gurus."

Ratnam : "When Guha was taking Rama across the river, he was telling Rama, 'O Lord, I am taking you across this river in a boat. But you should take me across the ocean of samsar.' So also we shall teach you Hindi and you should teach us how to attain God."

300. One devotee : "Would any physical disability stand in the way of Japa for the one's spiritual progress?"
Handicapped

Papa : "What exactly do you mean by physical disability?"

Devotee : "Say, one is a cripple."

Papa : "Being a cripple cannot be a disqualification for spiritual progress. Such a one repeats Ramnam and forgets all about the body. If you mean any disease in the body, there is a chance of the mind being dragged to the body often. In that case, you have to take proper medicine, get cured and then start doing your sadhana."

Damodar Rao : "Suppose a man is suffering from severe heart trouble and the doctor advises him not to repeat Ramnam. What should he do?"

Papa : "Let him repeat mentally."

Ratnam : "But mental repetition will be difficult for a beginner."

Papa : "What else can he do?"

Vasudeva Rao : "That patient defied the doctor's instructions and repeated Ramnam and is now free from heart trouble."

Papa : "That is it. That is exactly what Ramdas also would have suggested. But when you said that the doctor advised the patient not to repeat aloud, he suggested that mental repetition might go on. You know that doctors are, after all, bugbears."

"Why should one be afraid of heart trouble by repeating Ramnam? If on account of repeating Ramnam the heart fails, let it go. That is the best one can do while passing away—repeating Ramnam."

301. A devotee : "Swamiji, it is said somewhere that we must repeat
Progress the mantra as many lakhs of times as there are letters in it, before
depends on we can expect any effect. Is that correct?"
intense
devotion Papa : "Not as many lakhs, but as many crores."

A devotee : "Ah, crores ! Is it possible ? No. It is impossible. How can one do so much japa ?"

Another devotee : "Haridas repeated ten lakhs of times daily." (*Perhaps here each letter of the mantra was counted as one*).

The devotee : "Does it take effect only after the completion of that number ?"

Papa : "It takes effect almost immediately you start the japa. The process of purification commences and you can yourself watch your progress. Real progress depends upon the intensity of your devotion to God."

302. A devotee : "Many people say that Swami Ramdas is a great saint.
Only a child What does Swamiji think about himself ?"
of Ram

Papa : "Ramdas is smaller than the smallest child of Ram. That fact is also made known to him by Ram Himself. Otherwise he does not know himself what he is and what he is not."

A devotee : "Papa, you narrated yesterday how you saved that Mangalore boy who was working in a hotel. After he had your darshan, he renounced everything and left for the Himalayas. Another man full of vices was transformed by your embrace. So, will you not kindly transform us also by your power?"

Papa : "Mother, what are you talking? Ramdas is only a child and you are Mother Shakti—the embodiment of divine power. How could the Mother ask the child to transform Her?"

The devotee : "Let me remain a mother and also remain a child—both."

Papa : "You can play whatever game you like. Ramdas is always your child."

The devotee : "That is how you evade the question altogether. It is not that I alone want your grace. You may transform anyone of us here. I shall be satisfied."

Papa : "You are the embodiment of divine power. That is how Ramdas sees you. But you pretend as if you have no power."

The devotee : "That is how you see us. But we must ourselves also see like that. We do not do so. Grant us that vision."

Papa : "What a play is this? When you are verily that Almighty power itself, why do you ask for it?"

The devotee : "Swamiji, when you bless anyone, how does the blessing work upon him?"

Papa : "Ramdas never blesses, he only loves all."

303. 10 p.m. When Papa was about to go to bed, he was told that
A phone call there was a trunk-telephone call for him from Bombay. Papa hurried up to the telephone and took up the receiver.

"Hallo ! hallo ! Ah, how are you ? It is very good. How is Chandrakala ? Oh, good. She must be completely well by the time we come there. How is your health ? You must also take care of your health and be all right when we come there. Mataji is standing by his side here. Birthday ! Whose ? Shraddha's birthday ! Ah, Shraddha ! Blessings to you for a happy, prosperous, healthy and long life. How do you like it ? Pranav ! How do you do ? Excellent. Ah, ha, ha, ha ; that is very good ; the best piece of news. Yes, got it this morning. All right."

The call was from Natverlal G. Parikh, Bombay.

XXXIV

Hyderabad, November 17, 1953

304. Residence of Rani Lalitha Devi. 7 a.m. Papa had taken his
Blessings breakfast. The first batch of devotees had come very early for
mean love darshan and they were sitting in front of Papa.

S: "During yesterday's talks Papa said that Papa did not bless anybody. How can Papa say so?"

Papa: "Ramdas does not bless anybody. Some years ago he was only writing 'Love and Namaskars' in his letters to friends. But they did not like his giving them namaskars. They wanted blessings. So he uses the word 'blessings' which actually stands for only love."

Bhagatji (*Jagannathdas by name*), a Gujarati devotee in Hyderabad, used to attend the daily bhajans and talks. He had no talks with Papa. Last Sunday, at Rani Barkat Rai's house, Shivmohanlal introduced Bhagatji to Papa as a very good, devoted and saintly person. Thereafter he began to come and sit near Papa, embrace him, and stroke his feet like a child.

305. Papa had to leave Hyderabad by the 9 a.m. train for Sholapur. The
Hyderabad to party left Rani Lalitha Devi's residence in time, but was detained at
Mohol the railway station for a very long time as the train was late. The
waiting-room was fully crowded with devotees and they all rejoiced
at the good fortune of having a longer time with Papa.

Sholapur, November 18, 1953

The train arrived at Sholapur around 9 p.m. Papa was received at the station by Sri N. L. Mudur and was taken to his residence. Instead of three, the party had now swelled up to eleven. Prof. Krishna Rao had sent in his car Veeraraghavan, Nanjunda Sastri, his mother and M. Satyanarayana Rao's wife, in advance, to Sholapur; he and his wife travelled with Papa by train. M. G. Krishna Rao had sent his son and daughter in advance to Akalkot station. They joined Papa at that station

with food for him and the party. They had cooked the food at the house of the station master, Akalkot, and were bubbling with joy when they got into the compartment with hot meal for Papa, and more so, when they saw Papa enjoying it.

When Papa visited Sholapur on the previous occasion, he had stayed for a day at the house of N. L. Mudur, a cousin of Mataji.

November 19, 1953

Mudur's house. News about Papa's arrival had spread and devotees were pouring in large numbers from early morning for darshan. Govind Balwant Kulkarni Sarolkar of Mohol (Papa's host at Mohol) came at noon. He saw Mataji and wanted to know what special arrangements he should make during Papa's stay at Mohol. Mataji told him that only a separate house with a good supply of water was needed. He then returned leaving his son there to escort Papa and party to Mohol.

The party left Sholapur at 4-15 p.m., in three cars. Besides Prof. Krishna Rao's car that was placed at Papa's disposal, a taxi also was engaged to accommodate the rest of the party. There was another car belonging to a Parsi devotee in which were Mudur's wife and daughter, Maniben and another Parsi lady. In Papa's car was Nanjunda Sastri. Papa asked Sastri to go and sit in the taxi in order to give place to Sarolkar's son who was escorting the party. Sastri therefore took his seat in the taxi. Papa's car started first, the Parsi friend Nagarwala's car followed and the taxi behind it. Veeraraghavan drove Papa's car.

Mohol, November 19, 1953

306. On the outskirts of Mohol the host and some other devotees were waiting. Some of them garlanded Papa and Mataji. The whole group then walked behind the car repeating Ramnam. In fifteen minutes Papa was in the house intended for his five-day stay at Mohol.

It was a spacious house in the ancient style. There was a big room where the newly made mud-flooring, smeared with cowdung, was still damp. A kitchen and long verandas along three sides of the house completed the whole structure. By the side of a veranda were kept a big drum filled with water and a few empty pots.

Immediately on arrival, Papa was asked to take his seat on a mattress spread on the floor of the veranda, and many men and women came for his darshan. Mataji, in the meantime, made a survey of the house and was on the look-out for the other two cars to arrive. She waited for quite a long time and it was getting late for Papa to take his evening milk. Soon Mudur's wife, daughter, Maniben and the other Parsi

woman arrived. With frightened faces, but with an expression of gratitude, they ran up to Papa, put their heads at his feet and with tears in their eyes, narrated what happened to them on the way.

Maniben : "Papa, on the way, our driver lost control of the wheel with the result that the car made a swing and turned upside down. It was such a dangerous accident that all of us in it would have either died on the spot or received major injuries. But we all women were calm and cool, and repeating Ramnam, one infusing courage into the other. We all came out of the car absolutely safe except for a small cut in my hand caused by a broken glass. One side of the car was completely smashed, though the engine is safe. It was a miracle and we attribute it to your grace and the glory of Ramnam."

Papa : "So Ramnam has saved your life. It is indeed by God's grace that you all came out unhurt."

The Parsi woman (*excitedly*) : "I was repeating aloud Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram and some others were repeating Ramakrishna Hari. How wonderfully courageous we all were ! There was no panic. In the midst of the accident, Mudur's wife was assuring us that nothing serious would happen to us. She asked her daughter to take heart. Papa, we now understand how Ramnam can save us from the greatest peril."

Lalitha (*Mudur's daughter*) : "Papa, I was sitting in the front seat and, after the accident, I found myself holding my spectacles in my hand very carefully. A hit here or there would have injured my eyes more than any other part of the body."

Papa : "The power of Ramnam has been proved. It has saved your life. Yours is now a concrete example as to how one can be saved from even the greatest calamity, if one has Ramnam on the tongue."

Maniben was then sent to the local doctor to have the cuts dressed properly.

307. Most of the luggage had arrived by that time and Mataji started
A favourite work in the kitchen in right earnest. When the news of the accident
game reached her ears, she felt happy that all of them were unhurt, and
remarked : "If some one in a party is destined to meet with any
serious accident, the other members of the party are also involved. Something very
serious would have happened but Ramnam saved you all."

Nanjunda Sastri and two others, who were in the taxi that followed, had got down and waited near the damaged car, and sent those who were in the unlucky car, in their taxi. They were later picked up by Prof. Krishna Rao's car.

Papa (to S.) : "What is Mataji doing ?"

S : "She received the things just now and has begun cooking."

Papa : "So she has started her favourite game. Isn't it? All is a game after all."

By 7-30 p.m., milk for Papa was ready. A couple of wooden planks were placed in the big room and Papa was called in.

When Papa was walking up to the place where the planks were kept for him to sit on, a thorn pricked his foot. Mataji pulled it out and showed it to S.

S : "Papa, I was walking in this room for such a long time and no thorn pricked my foot. How is it the moment you came in, you got it?"

Papa : "There may be plenty of them here. You will also get it. Don't worry."

Papa (to Mataji) : "How do you like the arrangements? You wanted a separate house and a lot of water. You have both. What more do you want?"

Mataji (laughing) : "That will do; we will arrange things and adjust ourselves."

Papa : "Have you asked for a cot?"

Mataji : "Not yet. I shall ask for it."

Papa took bread with ghee, vegetables and milk, and got up.

S : "Papa can now freely walk here. The thorns have been removed as far as possible."

Papa : "What about food for all of you?"

Mataji : "We are preparing some light food now and from tomorrow we shall have regular meals."

308. Prof. Krishna Rao's wife : "When they have made arrangements,
Ramnam, we can prepare food for all of us."
a great
protector Mataji : "Why only for all of us? We can even prepare for ten or
fifteen more. We have no fear."

Papa : "Ramdas knows you have conquered fear. When you assure us like that, Ramdas is also free from all fear."

Mataji then saw to it that the Parsi woman, Mudur's wife and daughter and also the drivers of the cars, who were to return to Sholapur, were given food early. Before starting, they came and took leave of Papa, when he said : "Have Ramnam always on your tongue and you will be free from all danger. Experience has proved that Ramnam can be a great protector."

After they had left, Sastri and S. were sitting near Papa and gently stroking his legs. Papa looked tired after the journey and felt sleepy.

Papa : "Ramdas feels very tired and sleepy. The moment food went in, he is feeling more sleepy. After all it is an old horse. It cannot knock about as before."

Sastri : "Today's journey was not long."

Papa : "Ramdas is more tired because five of our party were involved in that accident and sustained the shock of their life and Ramdas has had a major share of it. After the massage he will be all right."

A cot was brought and Papa's bed was laid on it. When the hold-all was opened, Papa found in it some tins.

Papa : "You have brought rusks also ! What are the other tins ?"

S : "They are biscuits (*salted*) ; we have bread also."

Prof. Krishna Rao : "We have sent for more bread."

S : "Papa, we will have plenty to eat."

Papa : "Then Ramdas has no fear at all."

It was decided that instead of sleeping in the room that had a damp floor, Papa might sleep in the veranda. Temporary screens were made up to cover the sides. Sastri, Veeraraghavan, Prof. Krishna Rao and a few others spread their beds on the veranda to the left.

S. and Veeraraghavan started massaging Papa's back and legs.

Papa : "Where is he ? He said he would send some screens."

S : "Who, Papa ?"

Papa : "Our host, Govind Rao Kulkarni."

Veeraraghavan : "He is a very old man."

Papa : "Though he is an old man, he has made all the necessary arrangements."

Now, loud snoring was heard from one of the friends sleeping in the veranda to the left.

Sastri : "Can Papa hear the noise ?"

Papa : "Yes, very well."

S : "Somebody has started sawing wood."

Papa : "It is a regular saw-mill. They have put in a very big log of hard timber. Those who can absorb the sound may sleep near him. Perhaps Sastri who is by his side can do this before it reaches Ramdas. Now let us stop this talk. Ramdas feels sleepy."

The massaging was stopped, Papa got up from the cot. The cot was slightly moved to one side by Mataji.

Papa : "Is the cot standing all right or will the planks topple down when Ramdas turns from one side to the other ?"

S : "It is firm. Even if Papa dances on it, it won't collapse."

Papa : "If Ramdas falls down, the fall may stop the working of the saw-mill !"

Laughing and laughing, Papa started coughing and asked for a dose of cough syrup. Mataji gave a dose and Papa went to sleep.

November 20, 1953

Papa got up as usual at 6 a.m. When asked if he had good sleep, Papa said : "It was fairly chill at night but Ramdas slept well."

It was 7-30 a.m. when Papa's breakfast was ready, as milk came late. Till 9 o'clock devotees were coming and going in large numbers. At 9 a.m. he was taken to a temple nearby for a two-hour programme of bhajan and pravachan, during which Janardan Pant read out Guru Stuti, composed by him in Marathi, and offered it at Papa's feet.

309. After his noon rest Papa was sitting in the veranda. Mataji and S.
On marriage of girls were in the hall engaged in cutting fruits for him.

Mataji (to S.) : "Janardan Pant's daughter came to me and quietly asked if I had received her letter. I replied I had not received any letter from her. She then

said she had written to me something, even without the knowledge of her father. It seems she wants some help to join some boarding home or orphanage. It struck me then that it would be better she got married, and some help, say five hundred rupees, might be given to Janardan Pant to have the marriage conducted soon. It is better to have a settled life soon, than to get admission to a boarding home and so on. I must tell this to Papa today itself so that he can speak to Janardan Pant about it. The quicker it is done the better. Please remind me of it when we are together."

S: "So you have to arrange for a marriage now."

Mataji: "Such things only I can do. We should put into practice what Papa teaches us. When we have an opportunity like this we should not lose it."

S: "Janardan Pant has become very weak now."

Mataji: "When I think of what he was and what he is now, the contrast is really great. I may seem to sit in judgement on others, but I tell you that he appeared to be so much advanced on the path that his kundalini must have risen to the heart centre. He attracted a large number of men and women to his pravachan. Later, we received a letter that he got married and this is his condition."

When Papa came in and had fruit, Mataji did not make any reference to Janardan Pant; but when he came for coffee at 3 o'clock, she explained to him what Janardan Pant's daughter had told her and then put forward her suggestion.

Papa: "The girl is so small. If married soon she will start bearing children one after another every other year, and in what a horrible condition she will be after some years! Is she going to get a rich husband? Somebody with a low salary may marry her, and with the poor salary and all the children what a life it will be!"

Mataji: "Papa, to leave these girls in some boarding home, under the wardens and all kinds of people in charge, is not safe. You know the mentality of these grown-up girls nowadays. They cannot be trusted even under the direct protection of their parents. What can be their fate when they are under the care of strangers?"

Papa: "A few may go astray. But this bearing of children from now itself is simply horrible. She can learn something and earn for herself."

After coffee, Papa went out without agreeing to her suggestion. But it was revolving in Mataji's mind.

Mataji (to S.): "See, Papa has now completely turned down my suggestion; but you will see that after some time he comes and says what I say is right."

S : "Will you ask him about it again ?"

Mataji : "I won't."

S : "Do you mean to say that Papa will think over the matter again and revise his opinion about it ?"

Mataji : "Yes."*

At 4 p.m. Papa was again in the temple for the programme of bhajan and pravachan. Pravachan was by Prof. Bandre of Sholapur, a scholar in Kanarese. He spoke in Marathi about the glory of Divine Name.

The next programme was to begin at 8 p.m. A few minutes before 8 o'clock Papa sent a man to find out if the programme would start exactly at 8 p.m. News was brought that feeding was still going on in that place, and it would be sometime before things would be ready for the programme. Papa waited till 9 p.m. and sent another to find out how far arrangements had progressed. The man came to say that it would take another half an hour ; everything was ready except the bhajan party.

Papa : "Doesn't matter. Ramdas will go there now. Let the bhajan party do bhajan later. The pravachan in Marathi may start."

Papa decided that he would return by 10 o'clock as it was difficult for him to sit longer at night. So Maruti did pravachan for an hour in front of Papa. Papa was back at his place of residence by 10-15 p.m.

* The girl has since been married.

XXXV

Mohol, November 21, 1953

310. As it was very chill in the morning, Papa did not come out until there was bright sunshine. He was sitting on his cot in the veranda where there were screens on the sides.

Rush for darshan, why?

Papa was taking coffee prepared by Mataji who was standing near him. There was a great rush of devotees.

Papa (*to Mataji*): "Why are these people after Ramdas? What has he got in him? He simply eats, drinks and sleeps. What else does he do? What do these people see in him? What do they come for?"

Mataji: "They have come only to see the one who eats, drinks and sleeps."

Papa: "It seems some people were saying that Ramdas is famous not because of any merit that he now has but because of the fame he earned here during his sadhana days. Did you hear it? Do you think so many would have run after Ramdas, who is now in white clothes, if this were his first visit to Sholapur district?"

Mataji: "You talk as if people are not mad after you now when you go to new places. You are simply pulling our legs."

When Papa finished coffee and got up, the napkin that was spread on Papa's lap fell down on the floor which was far from being neat or tidy. When it fell down, Papa knew that Mataji would not like it. He looked at her and laughed. Mataji also laughed as if she thought him careless. Papa laughed still more and said: "This naughty child is a great burden to you, is he not?" She too joined him in the laughter. What else could she do?

311. Samtani, a Sindhi devotee who came to see Papa, mentioned in the course of the conversation that while in Delhi he had seen Papa's letter to Sevakram on Gandhiji's experiment in brahmacharya, and wondered why Gandhiji, at that age, found it necessary to experiment that way. Papa replied that Gandhiji was unique in every way and an ordinary man would find it difficult to understand him.

Gandhiji's experiments in brahmacharya

Papa : "Ramdas is feeling sleepy. You may also go to bed."

November 22, 1953

313
**Nama Japa
Yajna**

The main purpose of Papa's visit to Mohol was to attend the celebration connected with the completion of fourteen crores of Japa (Ramnam vocal repetition). In fact they had exceeded the target, and had done eighteen crores.

That being the day of celebration many devotees had come even the previous night and were staying on. At 8-30 a.m., Prof. Krishna Rao's car, decorated with garlands, stood at the gate to take Papa in procession through the streets of Mohol. Papa stepped into the car and Veeraraghavan drove it. Country band led the way and a large number of men, women and children followed at the rear singing Ramnam. It took about an hour and a half for the procession to pass through all the main streets of the place and when it reached the mandir a large crowd had already gathered there. Alighting from the car, Papa went inside the mandir and sat on the asan provided for him. Then commenced the maha pooja.

Govinda Rao Sarolkar and his son Prabhakar did the pooja of Papa's holy feet and at the end offered him consolidated account showing a total of eighteen crores of japa done by the devotees. Other devotees also performed pada-pooja one after the other, which lasted for an hour. Papa returned to his residence at 11 a.m.

There were elaborate arrangements for feeding a large number of people at the mandir. It was reported later that about one thousand five hundred people were fed. Though it was a big gathering, things went off smoothly. There was no complaint or friction of any kind.

In the evening was the women's programme. There was a pravachan in Marathi by Smt. Kashibai, which Papa liked and appreciated very much.

314.
**Self-
realisation**

All the devotees were anxious that Papa should speak a few words. Papa agreed to do so between 8-30 p.m. and 9-30 p.m. A large crowd had gathered before 8-30 p.m. and the mandir compound was crammed to its capacity.

The substance of what Papa spoke in Hindi is as follows :

"Beloved embodiments of the Divine,—Ramdas beholds you as such. Ramdas will speak a few words about God-realisation. God-realisation is the goal of life. It grants you the knowledge that everything is God. This is parabhakti or the vision of God. God is not different from you. All of you are the very forms of God.

"God is described as purusha and prakriti. As prakriti He appears as all forms. Purusha is the static brahman—the basis on which prakriti plays this universal game or lila.

"So when we realise that all the different forms we see are of the Supreme One, the so-called difference of sex—male and female—is realised to be false. Whatever form we see is the form of prakriti. One gets this grand vision only after jnana—the realisation of Atman.

"*The Upanishads* declare that God reveals Himself in that person whom He chooses. Till then God wears the mask of ignorance. You are all verily forms of the Divine and there is nothing for you to attain. You have only to remove the veil that you have put on pretending that you are different from God. You have to realise that you are He. Sadhana is done by His grace alone when He wills to remove the veil. As you are all votaries of the Divine name, it should be taken that divine grace is on you all.

"By the sadhana of repetition of God's name in order to remember Him, you get immediate result which is bliss. You should repeat the Name in a state of surrender to the Divine. Then alone you get the joy of the Name. Ramdas can assure you that namasmaran is the easiest sadhana. It can take one to the peak of spiritual realisation. Different kinds of sadhana have been prescribed, but the best of them all is the repetition of the Divine name. Take the Name with all love and devotion and see for yourself how it grants you the highest bliss and peace. The simple name (राम) of two letters is so powerful that it confers on you the highest beatitude."

Papa then related some of his own experiences, how he was initiated into Ram mantra, how he had first the vision of Lord Krishna, how he had the darshan of Sri Ramana Maharshi, and how he got the universal vision after twenty days' continuous repetition of Ramnam in the cave at Arunachala which brought him Divine bliss in the ocean of which he still continued to swim.

Extolling the glory of Ramnam, he referred to the likhit japa yajna started at the instance of Mataji in connection with the silver jubilee of her renunciation.

He expressed his joy at the success of the devotees of Sholapur district in completing eighteen crores of japa as against their target of fourteen.

Concluding, Papa asked everybody to take seriously to the repetition of Ramnam. By that they could free themselves from the bondage of ignorance and live ever in eternal bliss and peace.

Krishna Rao, Veeraraghavan, Govinda Rao and his sister Kamala, left for their places in the evening. Many devotees who had come the day before also left, only a few remaining behind.

315. 10 p.m. Papa sat up on his bed after the massage was over.
Anxious Mataji and S. on either side were gently pressing his arms. Papa
to serve looked tired.

Papa: "This body is moving about now because it is looked after carefully. Ramdas is not going to drop this body in the near future. It has to do a lot of work yet."

Mataji: "Don't give up the body, Papa."

Papa: "There is joy in service. So Ramdas will keep this body for the service of Ram for a long time."

S: "That is why Papa drew Mataji to him for taking care of his body."
(She joins Papa just after Papa's sadhana days.)

Mataji: "No, Papa. If it were not me, somebody else would have looked after Papa."

November 23, 1953

316. From early morning devotees from distant villages poured in groups.
Pada-poojas,
the order of One group performed pada-pooja, spent about fifteen minutes
the day with Papa and left. Then another group, then another and yet
 another. This went on for over three hours. Papa was to go to the
temple for the morning bhajan at 8-30, but was not able to till 9-30 though many
were waiting for him at the temple.

At 11 o'clock or so Papa came back from the mandir and again the pada-poojas started. They were not over even when it was nearing twelve. Papa had to stop then as he had to have his shave and bath. Immediately after bath and meal, pada-poojas again went on until he retired for rest. When he got up, there was yet a larger crowd waiting and again there were numerous pada-poojas. The previous day, darshan was the order of the day while that day it was pada-pooja. It was nearly 7-30 p.m. when the crowd dispersed. Then came a group of officers—the local supply officer, magistrate and a few others, who asked a few questions. Papa talked to them for some time and then they left.

317. **Love sweetens food** From the time Papa and party arrived there on the 19th, Mataji had been busy supervising the kitchen. Prof. Krishna Rao's mother and wife, and Satyanarayana Rao's wife worked hard in the kitchen. Krishna Rao's mother, though old, was extremely active and hard working. She was very much devoted to Papa and Mataji and took great pleasure in serving them whenever they visited Hyderabad. When she got an opportunity to accompany Papa to Mohol, she took it as a godsend. After partaking of the food prepared by her at Mohol, Papa used to say that he had not tasted such delicious food before. Mataji's remark about it was that the food tasted so fine, as Krishna Rao's mother had poured into it all her love while cooking. The old mother was very happy and felt blessed by her stay at Mohol and seva to Papa. (She passed away a few days later.)

318. **Mataji's scrupulous cleanliness** There were not less than twentyfive to thirty people partaking of food, tiffin and so forth every time. Sometimes, the number was more. With scrupulous care Mataji saw to the proper feeding and conveniences of the devotees who stayed with Papa. The house became a miniature ashram and things went on in the same style as in Anandashram. Mataji had to attend to all this in addition to her usual work of serving Papa, and so was busy everyday from early morning till bedtime.

Every time a vessel was used, Mataji washed it with soap and water, wiped it with a dry towel and kept it on a plate, properly covered. If a spoon or cup fell on the ground, and S. smiled at her, she would say : "I will clean it again and keep it, as it only shows Papa is testing my patience. In me yet remains that cleanliness fad. It is like oil kept in a leather vessel. However well you may clean the vessel, a trace of oil always remains."

Making fun of Mataji, Papa remarked : "She has now relaxed to a great extent. That is due to contact with us."

S : "Papa, the most surprising thing is that she has gone a step farther than we."

Papa : "How is that ? What did she do ?"

S : "When we were travelling from Hyderabad to Sholapur, we all took food in the Railway compartment. I went into the bathroom and washed my hand but did not wash my mouth. Mataji washed her hand and also mouth in the bathroom. So far she has not been even entering the bathroom. See how much she has improved in our company !"

319. Mataji (to S.) : "Have you got two hundred rupees in the purse
Mataji's after reserving the necessary amount for our tickets ?"
generosity

S : "Yes, there is sufficient money."

Mataji : "I want to get some sarees of the local variety."

S : "To whom are you going to give them ?"

Mataji : "To a devotee's wife and daughters. A few yards of shirting also
for the boys."

S : "How many children has he ?"

Mataji : "Six. I want to give them, unnoticed by others, because they do not
like my giving anything to these children. They are in a very bad condition and are
also teased by others. When I see these children, I remember the case of Jnaneshwar
Maharaj's father. When he became a householder after being a sannyasi for some
time, he and his wife were despised by the people."

320. Papa was extremely busy all the day in the midst of devotees,
Papa's submitting to their worship and attending programmes in the mandir.
unsparing One devotee, seeing how Papa was not given even a few minutes'
service rest, expressed his desire that Papa should rest. Papa replied : "If
the wick has to burn bright, you cannot spare oil. If one has to
serve, one cannot find rest. One wears one's life out in service" and gave a beatific
smile.

November 24, 1953

321. Papa had gone for bhajan at the mandir. Mataji and S. were alone
Mataji's in the room.
concern for
the distressed S : "Have you kept this woollen shawl for the devotee ?"

Mataji : "Yes, I wanted to send it through his daughter. Where is she ? Has
she gone away ?"

Mataji then came out to see if that girl was there, but found she had left.
Coming back, she said, "Nobody likes those children here. When I asked that man
who was waiting outside if that girl had gone, he replied with great contempt. It is
good the devotee and his family are going away today to their village. I am happy to
hear that. Otherwise, if they stay here after we leave, these people may even search
their belongings and say they are all stolen from here."

An old man and a young boy were busy in the morning and evening hours, carrying water from a distant well. When Mataji and S. were talking in the room, the boy came with a big pot of water. He was very cheerful. Seeing him happy and cheerful, S. remarked : "See, though this boy is working so hard, he seems to be joyous all the time."

Mataji : "They are all working here with great joy. I wanted to give something to this boy. We have a lot of wheat flour. But our host objected to my giving anything to him. I did not want to hurt his feelings and so kept quiet, but only requested him to permit the man who was cleaning vessels to take something. He agreed to that. I told his son later that they should not harbour any ill-feeling towards the workers. What is the use of taking Ramnam all these years, if they cannot love poor servants and cannot even tolerate our giving anything to them? K. comes and quietly advises me not to give any food and other things to local people but give only to Janibai."

S : "Who is Janibai and why is K. so particular about her?"

Mataji : "She is known to him well. K. was asking some devotees, who prayed for prasad, why they should ask for prasad when they had not brought anything. He himself did not bring anything though he is a well-to-do man."

S : "If they love and treat all alike, Papa will not have to come here at all."

Mataji : "I do not expect that they should extend their love to all alike all of a sudden. Let them do as much as it lies in their power. It is very bad to give to some and refuse to some others. I do not mean that one will be able to give indefinitely. I won't be able to do so myself. Suppose a thousand people come here, do you think I shall be able or even Papa will be able to feed them? But we do as much as we can without making any distinction. If they cannot give, let them at least enjoy seeing others give, instead of feeling sorry for it."

S : "Whether they are able to give or not, they must have the mind to give."

Mataji : "Yes, that is right. External action is unimportant because everybody is subject to limitations."

322. After the evening programme, Papa and Mataji visited the house of Govindarao Sarolkar, where pada-pooja was performed in the midst of a large crowd. Papa did not go to the mandir for the night programme but wanted to rest by 10 p.m.

**Mataji's
Poorvashram
relations**

Mataji and S. were in the room busy packing. Papa was outside in the veranda talking to the Collector of the district and his mother who had come for darshan. Mataji went for a few minutes to the kitchen to give them some prasad. Returning from there she sat again for packing. In a few minutes the Collector's mother came in to take her leave of Mataji. After she had left, Mataji remarked : "When I saw her I remembered Doctor's (Dr. Ramarao Kalle's) mother*. Their features are similar. She was fairer before her son passed away. She loved me very much and could not control her sorrow whenever she saw me. Of course, Doctor and his wife loved me more."

S : "Has she anything against you now ?"

Mataji : "Nothing at all."

S : "When did you see her last ?"

Mataji : "Twenty-three years ago. That was the last time when I saw them all."

* Mataji's mother-in-law in purvashrama.

XXXVI

Mohol to Sakori, November 25, 1953

323. The party was to leave by 9-15 a.m. to board the passenger train
Joy in for Dhond *en route* to Sakori.
separation too

The crowd thinned down ; the devotees who came from distant villages of the district had returned to their homes. Local devotees and a few from other places were yet coming in a stream from early morning to have darshan of Papa and Mataji before their departure.

Papa mentioned to many of them that this was his last visit to Sholapur as his health might not permit his coming again.

Papa often remarked about those devotees : "These people have great love and faith. This time Ramdas has stayed here long enough to satisfy all of them who came from several villages in the district. In their overflowing love, some of them had even embraced Ramdas."

At the railway station waiting-room, Raghunath Maharaj of Uple Dumala, seated on a chair in front of Papa, was talking with great emotion of the great joy they all felt in Papa's company and the deep sorrow they would experience after his departure. "It is true", he said, "saints give joy on meeting and sorrow on parting." Papa consoled them saying that there was joy in separation also since the devotees would then be constantly thinking of their Beloved. Nanjunda Sastri, Mrs. Krishna Rao, her mother-in-law and Mrs. Satyanarayana Rao remained behind as they were to return to their own homes as soon as Papa and party left. So, only Mataji and S. formed Papa's party, but a few devotees followed them up to Kurduwadi.

Krishnaji Ghatge travelled up to Kurduwadi in Papa's compartment. While taking leave, he was so much moved that words failed him and his eyes were filled with tears. He was struggling to say something. S. seeing him—a big man—weeping like a baby, was also moved and gave him a warm embrace. Mataji's eyes were moist and tears flowed down her cheeks, at Krishnaji's grief.

In the train, Papa ate the meal that was brought from Mohol, and took a short rest. He had his coffee at 3 p.m. The train was running a few minutes late.

324. The train reached Dhond before 4 o'clock. N.G. Bharucha and
Talk about two other devotees of the Kanya Kumari Sthan of Sakori received the
Mrs. Kalle party at the station and shortly afterwards they were all going in a
 car to Sakori.

The road was not good and so the car bumped and jolted a lot. Papa was talking on various matters to Bharucha; as the car was nearing Ahmednagar, remembering Dr. Ramarao Kalle, Papa asked Bharucha if he knew him. Bharucha replied in the negative, but after a few minutes, said: "There is one old mother who came to the ashram (Sakori) last week. We were told that she is the mother of Dr. Kalle."

Papa: "Is she still in the Ashram?"

Bharucha: "Might be there. I saw her there before I left the Ashram day before yesterday."

Mataji: "I thought of her only last night when I saw the Collector's mother. I was talking to S. about her."

S: "It seems they have not met for twentythree years."

Papa: "Is it twentythree years?"

Mataji: "Yes."

S: "It will be a happy meeting indeed."

Papa (*smiling*): "Yes, yes."

325. At Ahmednagar, Papa halted for a few minutes at the residence of
Good Dr. Sahasrabuddhe. At 6-15 p.m. the party again got into the car;
sadhana Papa, Mataji and S. were in the back seat. Mataji took the woollen
for S. waistcoat and asked Papa to put it on. She asked S. if he was free
 from headache.

S: "A few minutes' sleep in train made me all right."

Mataji (*to Papa*): "His headache is like a woman's headache; also his back-ache."

Papa (to S.): "Are you becoming a woman? In the company of women, are you developing their nature?"

Mataji: "Especially after he started preparing rotis for you."

S: "Yes, the company and influence of Mataji adds to it. The other day, when we went to Prof. Krishna Rao's house, I was made to sit in the midst of half a dozen mothers in the back seat of the car."

Papa: "When was it? Was Ramdas not there?"

S: "Papa did not come there."

Mataji: "S. and myself sat in the back seat and one by one, so many women came and I asked them all to sit with us saying that S. was to be counted among the women."

Papa: "It is a good sadhana."

Mataji: "This opportunity has come to you of its own accord. Take it as good sadhana."

S: "Yes, it is a great sadhana, no doubt."

326. Papa and party reached the Kanya Kumari Sthan at 8 o'clock and
Reception there was a hearty welcome by Sati Godavari Mata and the devotees
at Sakori of the Sthan. It was an agreeable surprise to meet there Sumitrabai
 Harite (Mataji's sister) and her husband, Shantaram Harite, who
 had come from Bombay, Rani Lalitha Devi, her daughter and Sanghi from Hyderabad,
 as also D. V. Narayanaswami of Madurai.

After the waving of lights and kumkum water, Papa entered the house of N. G. Bharucha; Godavari Mata garlanded Papa and Mataji and all the kanyas and devotees had their darshan.

Papa sat in the front hall for some time until he was called in for dinner. After a wash and change of dress, Papa took just a cup of milk. Godavari Mata and a few kanyas were around Papa.

Godavari Mata: "Papa, how is your health?"

Papa: "Health is not bad. But the journey is very tiresome."

Godavari Mata: "It was a great joy and surprise to us when news came about Papa's decision to come here."

Papa : "You have simply pulled him by your power."

Godavari Mata : "I have no power, Papa. The power is all yours."

Papa : "No, how can it be ? You are the embodiment of power."

Sakori, November 26, 1953

327. Kanya Kumari Sthan. Trasi Sundar Rao, Appibai and her sister came early in the morning from Bombay. Mataji was at her breakfast after Papa had finished his. They joined Mataji. Papa was strolling in the hall. Dr. Ramarao Kalle's mother, Anasuyabai (Mataji's mother-in-law) came and stood before Papa with folded hands. Seeing her near Papa, Mataji who had then taken her breakfast got up and came smiling towards the old mother. Looking at Mataji, the old mother was moved to tears. She took Mataji's hands in hers, saying : "What a long time since we met ! What a long time since we met last !" and wiped her moist eyes. Mataji, who was smiling all the while, enquired if she would have a cup of coffee. Though she replied that she would not, later she agreed and Mataji, rinsing her hands, herself prepared coffee and gave her a cup. They did not talk much, and after she had taken coffee she left.

Then S. asked Mataji how she felt.

Mataji : "I feel as if I have done a great thing."

S : "What is that great thing ?"

Mataji : "Meeting her."

S : "Did she talk about anything ? Has she gone ? She was telling Papa she would be going away this afternoon."

Mataji : "I asked her where she was going and as she said that she was going to Bombay, I again asked her why she should not stay on and travel with us to Bombay. She said she would write to Dr. Ramarao and decide later. These people might have been thinking that I have no love for them. Of course, for some time I had no love for them. Why for them ? I had no love for even my own body. To realise the formless eternal aspect of Papa one has to go beyond names and forms, even one's own name and body. After realising my oneness with Papa who is the transcendent Truth and also the entire manifestation there cannot be anybody outside the sphere of my love."

328. At 11-30 a.m. Godavari Mata brought Papa's meal and, with the assistance of the kanyas, served him.
Conversation with inmates

Papa listened to the discourse of Kumari Usha on *Jnaneshwari* between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. at the Zopadi, the place for bhajans and discourses, where there is a beautiful statue of Sri Upasani Baba.

9 p.m. Papa was sitting on a big cane-chair in the spacious hall of Bharucha's house. Godavari Mata and a few kanyas were sitting before him. Kumari Usha and another kanya were massaging Papa's legs, sitting close to him.

Godavari Mata : "Papa, you were gracious enough to come here for a second time. You have to come here for the third time also."

Papa : "Third time ! Don't know. If Ram wills, he will surely come."

Mataji who was a little away, laughed at this and said : "Papa was saying in Sholapur that this would be his last visit to that place. Here he is giving you some hope."

One kanya : "We feel blessed by your visit, Papa."

Papa : "Why, you have this mother here, a great soul. She is the holy Godavari, holy from birth."

One kanya : "By your presence, the Godavari will be sanctified."

Papa : "No, so many people go and bathe in the Godavari and get purified. Of course, it is said that saints sanctify places they go to. But Ramdas is only a child."

Mataji came with some sweets and distributed them to all present in the hall. To those who were massaging Papa's legs she said, "I shall put it in your mouth so that you may not have to get up to rinse your hands."

Seeing Mataji giving sweets to all, Papa remarked : "She is an expert in feeding. She is in her element when she has some food to distribute. That is the nature of the Mother."

After a little pause Papa said, "Ramdas hesitates to speak before you all about anything. You give such fine and eloquent pravachans that Ramdas feels small before you. It is mentioned in the programme that Ramdas has to talk at the Zopadi between 4 and 5 tomorrow evening. He wonders what he can talk to you about."

Kumari Usha : "Papa, of what can we all talk ? What effect has our talk on others ? A glance from you will work wonders."

329. **Sahaja samadhi** Papa did not reply. His eyes were closed and he was evidently thinking deeply. Opening his eyes and gazing at nobody but at something beyond, he said : "There are various types of samadhis, Sahaja samadhi is the highest. In that there is no break at all. He who is in sahaja samadhi is established in the Purushottama and enjoys constant bliss. He has no more sadhana to do. Without any effort he maintains this bliss while living and moving in the world. Somebody asked Ramdas why he is not repeating Ramnam. Who is to repeat Ramnam ? The one who was repeating has ceased to exist, having become one with Ram. In a poem written many years ago, Ramdas has said something to this effect. This does not mean there is no possibility of separation. There is separation, yet no separation. This is the state of parabhakti. There is the greatest joy in it. The jnanis and sannyasis do not realise this and therefore cannot enjoy it. You all know about these things."

Kumari Usha : "No, no, Papa. We know nothing. We may talk something, but lack the experience."

Papa : "Ram must make us mad of Him. Ramdas prayed to Ram to make him mad of Him so that he might think of Him constantly, keeping His name on the tongue without break. And Ram did make him mad. He gave up food and sleep and with the Name on his tongue, wandered about in jungles like a mad man. He was staying in such wild places as would make one tremble with fear."

Bharucha came up and told Papa, pointing out to Kumari Usha : "Papa, this is the lion of Sakori. The other one sitting opposite to her is the lamb."

Papa : "One must be the Vedanta kesari, and the other, the lamb of Sakori."

Usha : "Papa, when will you come again ?"

Papa : "Ramdas does not know."

Usha : "Papa knows everything."

Papa : "He knows and knows not."

November 27, 1953

330. **Oneness and individuality** 2-30 p.m. Only a couple of devotees were with Papa who was seated in the hall.

S : "While talking to the kanyas yesterday, Papa referred to a poem. It is said there that having bathed, danced and played in the Mother's love, the Mother raised her veil, the game of love ceased and there existed one only. Papa prayed to

the Mother to give him birth again to enjoy that play. If Papa lost himself in the Mother, who was there to pray? If Papa prayed, it means, Papa was maintaining the individuality, when there was no necessity for such a prayer."

Papa: "Yes, Ramdas can see, it is a contradiction. There must have been a subtle trace of individuality while praying and he has been reborn as the eternal child of the Mother."

S: "If there was a trace of individuality then, is there any difference between that and the individuality that Papa now has?"

Papa: "That is beyond expression. Ramdas cannot explain what it is."

Karkhanawala: "If there is absolute oneness and there is no trace of individuality, how can one sustain the body?"

Papa: "God sustains it. He has complete control over Prakriti. He can well take care of the body of one who is completely lost in Him."

331. Karkhanawala: "If that is the case, can He not stop the war and
War and misery in the world?"
saints

Papa: "Yes, He can. He works through saints. Generally He does not interfere with the workings of nature. When there is a war impending, if a saint says that the war will not break out, it will not. When the war is on, if the saint says the war should stop, it will."

S: "Is it a prophecy or an assertion?"

Papa: "In the former case it is a prophecy and in the latter an assertion."

332. Karkhanawala: "Why is it that when some saints have prophesied,
Saints work nothing happened?"
on different
planes

Papa: "It must be God who should prophesy or assert. It means that the saint should be completely in tune with God. Prophecy in that state has to come true. When he is not fully in tune with God, it may not come true."

Karkhanawala: "How is it that a saint who has attained the highest is sometimes in tune with God and sometimes not?"

Papa : "Saints work on different planes. They have to work through prakriti and, for that, working from different planes is necessary. They have to come down from the highest to work through prakriti. One who remains always in the nirguna cannot be of any help to aspirants. Gurus help aspirants by coming down to prakriti, at the same time standing above it. Really God's ways are mysterious."

333. Swami Chaitanyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, who had been staying with Dr. A. M. Patel at Khar for the last four months, had come to Sakori the day before Papa's arrival. Papa had not met him so far. Knowing that he was to give a discourse that evening, and Papa had to attend the same, Papa asked the devotees if that Swami had come. They replied that he had been there for the last four days. Papa then sent for him. The Swamiji came in fifteen minutes or so and sat near Papa. Papa greeted him, saying, "Swamiji, you are so gracious to come."

After the usual and formal enquiries about where he stayed, when he came, and so on, Papa asked after his pravachan that evening.

Swamiji : "They want me to speak. I shall speak something."

Papa : "They expect Ramdas also to make a pravachan. Ramdas does not know how to talk, and his Hindi is faulty. In what language do you speak?"

Swamiji : "I generally speak in Hindi, but here I might speak in Marathi though my Marathi is very faulty. Your faulty Hindi and my faulty Marathi can be much fun. After all it is only a fun. Who is benefited by hearing our talks? Absolutely none. Unless there is an awakening within the listeners, these talks cannot help anybody."

Papa : "Ramdas fully agrees with your view."

Swamiji : "Yes, Swamiji, people hear the talk and say afterwards that Swamiji spoke well or they pick out some faults and try to corner him. This is all the after-effect of the talk."

A devotee : "Why is it that the philosophies of various saints differ?"

Papa : "Because they are trying to express the inexplicable, which is beyond the range of thought. As Buddha has it, 'Do not dip the string of thought into the unfathomable. He who questions errs and he who answers errs'. So, trying to know God with our mind is like a salt doll measuring the depths of the ocean. It goes a few inches down and dissolves. So, who can measure the glory of God? It is impossible."

After casual talk for a few minutes, the Swamiji took his leave of Papa.

334. 9 p.m. Papa was sitting in a cane chair, Rani Lalitha Devi, Sundar
Descent of Rao, Appibai and a few others were with him.
Guru's grace—

joy of service Lalitha Devi : "You were saying that Guru's grace is transmitted to the disciple in three ways : by look, touch and thought. Why is it that you do not place your hand on our heads ?"

Papa : "You are touching his feet. So the touch is there. In some cases Ramdas places his hand on the heads of devotees. Whenever somebody places his head on Ramdas's feet he must feel the effect."

Lalitha Devi : "I do not find I am experiencing anything."

Papa : "You must be prepared to receive it ; you must be receptive and extremely humble. When you prostrate thus, your mind gets stilled and you enjoy peace of the Absolute for a few seconds."

Lalitha Devi : "Will that one touch take the devotee to the goal ?"

Papa : "Sometimes one touch will do. Sometimes many are required. With that experience, you must do intense sadhana—repetition of Ramnam. And each experience will give you added joy in the repetition. That will take you forward quickly."

Jijibai : "When I hear Ramnam or any other bhajan song, I feel a sort of commotion inside. My eyes are filled with tears. Though I do not experience anything higher, this much is there."

Papa : "Sri Ramakrishna has said that those who shed tears on hearing God's name will have no rebirth. You must have overflowing love for the Name. See that friend Narayanaswami, who came from Madurai and left this morning. He sheds tears profusely as soon as he sees Ramdas or sits for bhajan."

Lalitha Devi : "Shivmohanlal in Hyderabad also shed tears profusely during bhajan."

Lalitha Devi started stroking Papa's feet.

Papa : "You are all stroking Ramdas's legs. What do you get by that ? Do you get any immediate results or are you doing it in anticipation of some future results ?"

Mataji, who had just joined the group, said, "Come on, answer all of you. Papa is the examiner. Answer the question."

Lalitha Devi : "I do it because I feel like doing it and I feel happy then."

Sundar Rao : "I want to do a bit of service to the Guru and I am happy doing it."

Appibai : "I enjoy massaging Papa's feet. That is all I know."

Sundar Rao : "What is Mataji's opinion ?"

Mataji was silent.

Papa : "Why don't you say ?"

Mataji : "All the answers are right. Everybody does it because he or she finds joy in doing so. But when I was doing it, I was praying at the same time to Papa to take me into His supreme Being."

Papa : "A saint is a kalpataru and whatever one desires in his presence, one gets. But many desire only worldly things, better business, better salary, cure of diseases and so on."

Mataji : "They do so because they do not know that there is something higher to pray for."

Papa : "They do not know ! Even if we talk to them of the higher life, they say they want worldly gains."

Sundar Rao : "Now what has Papa got to say about the answers ?"

Papa : "Ramdas already told you ; a saint is a kalpataru and grants you anything you desire. Ramdas had unfortunately no opportunity to serve saints and he does not know that joy."

Mataji : "You did not need to serve."

Papa : "Needed or not is not the question. He never knew what joy it was to serve saints."

Mataji : "When I did any service to Papa, I did it with the prayer that I should be absorbed in His Being. Now I do it with the prayer for universal good. Some time ago when I prostrated at Papa's feet, I prayed to Papa to bless some persons, naming them. But that did not work well. The persons concerned showed no improvement. So, instead of having in my mind certain names and forms, I decided to pray for the entire universe."

Papa : "Now Ramdas remembers the joy he had when he stroked Mataji's feet."

Sundar Rao : "When was that ?"

Mataji (*laughing*) : "Oh, Papa did so once in the Ashram. I was sleeping in the afternoon with some pain in the body, and made some noise during sleep. Papa thought I had pain in the legs and so started massaging my legs. When I woke up I saw Papa sitting by my side ; he said he did so because I did not allow anybody else to massage my legs. Thereafter, I agreed to allow others to massage my legs."

Papa : "Shall Ramdas massage your legs and see how much Ramdas enjoys it.?"

Mataji : "No, Papa. You are already doing it through your other forms here."

335. Papa was in the hall of Bharucha's house. Seated before him
Enshrining were many devotees of the Kanya Kumari Sthan on one side, and
Papa in the Sati Godavari Mata and Kanyas on the other. Dr. Patel, an elderly
heart devotee of the Sthan, was sitting close to Papa.

Dr. Patel : "Papa, I must amputate both your feet and keep them with me for ever, and you will grow the feet again."

S : "Doctor cannot find any other way of keeping Papa's feet with him constantly."

Papa : "You must enshrine the feet in your heart. Why the feet alone, enshrine Ramdas himself."

Doctor : "You must come and remain there."

Papa : "As if Ramdas is not there already."

Doctor : "You are an avatar of Hanuman. You must give me darshan in that form."

Papa : "You are pucca (ripe). See, all your hair, even moustache, are grey, being ripe."

Doctor : "Your darshan must make me younger."

Papa : "You are ripe now, why do you want to be young ? One sannyasi, who was with us on tour for some time, asked Mataji, 'How am I ?' Mataji told him frankly, '*Tum Achhcha hai lekin thoda kachhcha hai*' (You are all right, but you are a bit unripe). You are fully ripe. Your heart is filled with prem. Where there is no abhiman there is prem."

336. Mataji had to send a letter written in Malayalam to Balamma in the ashram. It was past 9 p.m. when S. reminded her of the letter ; she said that it might be written in the morning. Mataji's letters were usually very long, covering eight or ten pages and would take many days to write.

Mataji's attitude to blood relations

S: "What did doctor's mother, Anasuyabai, tell you this morning ? You were talking for a long time."

Mataji: "I find it hard to remember what we talked about. I shall however try. I am trying to recollect how the talk started. Yes, yesterday morning she asked me not to forget the children. I was about to reply: 'When I myself am a child, whom am I to take care of?' But I did not speak that out. I thought, as it did not matter whatever way I talked, I would rather talk what she would like. Some interruption came and the trend of the talk was broken. Again this morning, some reference came. I heard that she had been telling people that I was saying I had given up samsar. What have I given up? Giving up one samsar, I have got another, So I wanted to reply to her on this point. As she did not ask this of me direct, I had to reply indirectly through another lady who was standing near. I told her that some might have been feeling that I have no longer any love for Ganesh and Narayan. How could that be? At one time I had to disown all my relations and even my own body, so that I might be absorbed in Papa's Eternal Being. Having been absorbed in Papa's Being and realising that the whole universe is myself, I love all alike. I may appear to be loving one more than another. It is like this. Take this body for example, I pay more attention to that part that aches or pains. That part of my body that does not get my attention does not cease to be mine. That I do not pay much attention to Ganesh and Narayan does not mean that they are not mine. Anasuyakka listened to this quietly and agreed with me."

Sumitrabai, Mataji's sister, later told Papa that Anasuyabai was happy after her talk with Mataji and that she was then going to ask Ganesh and Narayan to go to Mataji more often and remain in close touch with her.

November 28, 1953

337. At 3 p.m. Papa and a big party, including Godavari Mata, left for Shirdi to pay homage to the great saint of Shirdi, Sri Sai Baba at his samadhi.

Papa at the samadhi of Sri Sai Baba

Entering the big samadhi hall, Papa and others went near the samadhi. The person who was sitting there suggested that Papa might climb up to the raised platform to place the garland and prostrate. Papa climbed up, put the garland and placed his head on the samadhi. While descending, Papa came to the extreme end

of the wooden box that was placed on the smooth stone-step and was about to lower one foot down. But the box tilted, having lost its balance. Papa slipped. Before the box completely toppled down, Mataji, who was standing close by, held Papa with her hands and supported the box with one knee. Papa had now slipped down, his back rubbing against the wooden box. Immediately, others helped to raise Papa. Except for slight bruises on the back, there was no other injury. Mataji was a bit anxious about it and gave a hot fomentation to his back before he went to bed. Later, referring to this, Papa said, "Ramdas did namaskar with his forehead, but Sai Baba wanted him to do namaskar with the back also !"

338. At Shirdi, bhajan was held for an hour and a half, after which
Visit to Papa went round the place and left about 5-15 p.m. On the way
jaggery was the sugarcane farm of Ramarao Patel of Sakori whose house Papa
factory had visited two days earlier. It was said that Ramarao Patel's
 father was responsible for bringing Upasini Baba to Sakori and
subsequently establishing the Sthan there. At his request, Papa got down at his farm
where they were crushing sugarcane and preparing jaggery. Papa, Mataji and
Godavari Mata were seated in the centre of the jaggery manufactory. Fresh jaggery
was offered to Papa and distributed to all ; later, sugarcane juice was also distributed
to all present, though Papa could take only a little. It was a very happy gathering
where love overflowed. Dr. Patel and Bharucha were like little children ; Dr. Patel
placing his head on Papa's lap, rolled like a child and Papa patted him on the back.
The whole party returned to Sakori by 6-15 p.m.

339. After evening meal, Papa sat on the chair. A few devotees and
Good use Mataji sat before him.
of money

A devotee (*Parsi lady*) : "Swamiji, what is the use of money ?"

Papa : "For giving away."

Devotee : "To whom ?"

Papa : "To the needy."

Devotee : "How are we to find out who is the needy ?"

Papa : "That you have to find out."

Devotee : "This is very difficult. Sometimes some persons appear to be
deserving, but if you go deep into the matter you will see that they actually do
not deserve."

Papa : "If you go on analysing that way, you will not find any one really deserving. That would mean you do not want to give your money away."

Devotee : "Then, are we to give to anybody who comes and asks for help, as service to God?"

Papa : "That is the right way of giving. Your heart will be the right guide to decide if one is deserving or not."

Devotee : "Baba used to say that if we give money to beggars, we will be taking on their suffering."

Papa : "Is it not better to suffer for others?"

Devotee : "Baba meant that when we give we should not think that we are giving away to beggars but to God only."

Papa : "Of course, that is how it should be done. When we have money we must try to relieve others of their suffering. If our heart does not melt at the suffering of others, how can we expect God's heart to melt at ours? Christ said : 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.' Now, it is time that we went there. Bhajan has started."

Papa got up and went to the hall where the kanyas had started bhajan.

340. 9-45 p.m. Bedtime. Papa was being given fomentation to allay
Effect of the effect of the fall at Shirdi. Mataji was sitting near the cot.

**Papa's
presence**

Papa : "Many are saying that they get great joy at the very sight of Ramdas. what else has Ramdas got to give? Is that not enough that he radiates joy to others by his very glance?"

Mataji : "You have now only to make that joy permanent with them all."

Papa : "When they experience the joy once, they will strive hard and finally have it permanently."

November 29, 1953

341. Kanya Kumari Sthan : Papa was taken round the Sthan by Godavari
Papa Mata and Jijibai. First they went to the new room constructed
worshipped for Godavari Mata and occupied by her. From there they went to
as Upasini the room where Baba's swinging cradle hung. Papa was asked to
Baba sit in it. Mataji was also pressed to sit at Papa's side. She refused
 and stood aloof, looking at Papa. Jijibai brought a crown which
they used to put on Baba's statue, and placed it on Papa's head. The cradle was

swung for a while by the kanyas with their usual cradle song. They then took him to the kanyas' quarters where there was another cradle. Papa sat in it. The same crown was put on his head, he was adorned with a beautiful silk cloth and a flute was placed in his hand which made him look like Sri Krishna. They prostrated before him saying that he was their Baba. Papa asked them : "If you make him your Baba, who will be Swami Ramdas ?" They only smiled. It was a joy to see how Papa submitted himself to whatever the kanyas wished him to do. After seeing Baba's room and the kanyas' school, they returned to the Zopadi, where kirtan had started.

When the kirtan was over, Jijibai took Papa to her room where pooja was done ; with their usual song and a couple of flowers in hand, two kanyas removed the effect of any evil eye that might have been cast on Papa. It took a few minutes. What wonderful patience Papa showed when he submitted quietly to the removal of the effects of evil eye also !

November 30, 1953

342. **Departure for Bombay** Kanya Kumari Sthan. It was the day for Papa's departure. The eyes of the kanyas were brimming with tears. The kanya, who was serving Papa with great love and devotion and doing all the work at Bharucha's house, was quite grief-stricken at the very thought of Papa's departure. At 10-15 a.m., Papa and Mataji were at the Zopadi, giving darshan to all the devotees. Godavari Mata herself did Pada-pooja, assisted by some kanyas. Before finally leaving the Sthan, Papa and Mataji were again at the Zopadi for a few minutes.

Bombay, December 1, 1953

343. **With students of philosophy** Papa and party had arrived in Bombay after nine o'clock the previous night. A large number of devotees had received Papa at the railway station and taken them all to Ivorine, the residence of Natverlal G. Parikh.

A stream of devotees flowed in from early morning.

In the afternoon, some devotees were sitting before Papa, asking some questions. Prof. J N. Chubb brought a batch of his students in philosophy. Two among them had a few questions while others remained quiet. Two English ladies also joined the group.

A devotee : "It is said that we can make this world a heaven. How ?"

Papa : "By giving up ego-sense."

Devotee : "Is the ego also not divine ?"

Papa : "If you have realised that the ego is divine, then you have realised that everything is divine, and the world is then a heaven."

Devotee : "Swami Vivekananda says in his writings that for God-realisation one should become a sannyasi. Swami Ramatirtha says it is not necessary. Why do these great saints differ ?"

Papa : "Ramdas does not recall Swami Vivekananda having said so anywhere. Where has he mentioned it ? Have you read it yourself ?"

Devotee : "No. A friend told me."

Papa : "Before you make a statement, be sure of it."

Devotee : "Are fasts helpful for spiritual progress ?"

Papa : "An aspirant has to judge for himself whether fasting can help him keep his mind under control. No other person can give him guidance in this matter. He must himself study the state of his mind both while fasting and not fasting and decide."

Devotee : "How can we know whether our prayers are answered or not ?"

Papa : "It is better that our prayers are not answered at all, because we do not know what to pray for. One devotee prayed, 'O God, do not grant my prayers. In my foolishness I may ask for things that might harm me. You know what is best for me'."

344. A student : "How does Self-realisation of an individual help
Benefit of society ?"
Self-realisation

Papa : "By Self-realisation you become happy inwardly and therefore seek nothing from outside. So, your activities flow out only for the uplift and good of others. A man who is discontented within seeks for external things in order to get happiness, and by doing so harms society. He thinks he will get happiness from external objects. When you have found true happiness by realising the Self, that is by realising that your true nature is absolute peace and bliss, you are not in conflict with anybody, your vision is equal and your activities turn to the service of everyone. Then it is that you become the true instrument of God. Our little self stands in the way of our doing good to the world. Not only do we not do good, but we harm the world, as the spirit of exploitation seizes us and we do things only as prompted by the ego. After Self-realisation, our life will be entirely dedicated to the service of humanity. The happiest man is the most generous man. The miserly and selfish man, besides being miserable himself, makes others near him also unhappy."

Student: "When he gets the supreme Bliss, he indulges in it for himself. How are others benefited by that?"

Papa: "That is not like the enjoyment of the senses. A burning lamp cannot hide its light. So, when bliss is experienced within yourself, you spread it everywhere around you. It is not for any one individual, but for the whole universe."

A devotee: "It is said that Self-realised beings do not move in society. Is that correct?"

Papa: "Are you sure? If so, give an example. The great teachers were not selfish. They did not keep to themselves the spiritual knowledge they had gained. They lived in the world to elevate those who came into contact with them. Take the case of Buddha and Sankara. How much did they move about for the uplift of the people! They did not keep away from society or remain in solitude."

Devotee: "What I feel is that they do not have the initiative to go out and spread the message."

Papa: "You are wrong. Ramdas gave the examples of two great teachers who sacrificed all their lives delivering the divine message to the people."

Devotee: "That is not generally the case. Many do not like the idea of going out and preaching. They wish to keep to themselves whatever they have."

Papa: "If selfish, they are not genuinely spiritually illumined. Those who are really spiritually illumined will be absolutely selfless in their activities."

345. Devotee: "How to attain our real Being?"

**On meditation
and prayer**

Papa: "By constant meditation that you are the Spirit and not the body. By such constant thought and meditation it is that you realise your true Being."

Devotee: "How can that be done by an ordinary man?"

Papa: "What Ramdas said now is for the ordinary man. If one is an extraordinary man, then there is no struggle for him to get at the Truth."

Devotee: "Then, why can't ordinary men realise the Truth?"

Papa: "They do not want to. If they want to, they can, of course."

Devotee: "Self-realisation is wanted by all."

Papa : "No, not at all. Go and ask people if they want Self-realisation. They will tell you they do not want it as they have something or other to do."

Devotee : "How to persuade them to strive for Self-realisation?"

Papa : "To persuade them you yourself experience the Self first. An illumined soul alone can kindle another."

Devotee : "Is there no other way to realise God than by meditation?"

Papa : "Unless you constantly meditate that you are the Self, how can you realise Him? You have forgotten your true being. You must try to remember Him constantly. Otherwise you cannot tear off the veil of ignorance."

Devotee : "By doing good actions, can one not realise God?"

Papa : "Good actions help you to purify your mind which in turn, aids you in meditation."

Devotee : "What are good actions?"

Papa : "Actions done with the remembrance of God are good actions and those done in the forgetfulness of God are bad. Good actions take you nearer to God and bad actions farther from Him."

An English lady : "May I know if it is true that however much we may strive for Self-realisation, karma plays a great part in our life and often stands in the way of our progress and does not enable us to attain it in this life?"

Papa : "How can we know our karma is such that we cannot attain Realisation in this life? On the other hand, we must consider that karma is favourable to us and carry on our spiritual practices optimistically. A pessimist has no chance of progress."

English lady : "For meditation, is it necessary that one should sit in a particular posture and have a particular time? Does it harm one to meditate as and when one feels like doing so? I have tried to meditate in a stereotyped way but find that my best meditation comes when I have finished reading *the Bhagavad Gita*."

Papa : "You seem to know the best time for your meditation. So you may have your meditation at the time you feel like doing so. The best posture for meditation is the one that enables you to sit comfortably. There are people who do not know when exactly they should meditate. For them, some fixed hours are necessary; for you it is not."

English lady : "Strange as it may seem, I cannot understand. To meditate, one must be still, but I feel sometimes that my best moments of meditation are when I am walking."

Papa : "It is perfectly all right. Go on with your practice. You must have joy in meditation. You should not force it. It must come spontaneously."

A devotee : "I am sticking to one Name, but I am attracted to different forms—sometimes Rama, sometimes Krishna. Is it wrong?"

Papa : "No, it is not at all wrong if you give the same name to all the forms. The One is in many forms. Ultimately you have to transcend all names and forms and reach that supreme consciousness in which there is no movement or change. So, names and forms are a help only to enable you to rise beyond them."

Devotee : "Does it mean that one should have only one Name?"

Papa : "For constant practice one Name is much better. You can, of course, repeat other Names during bhajans and kirtans ; the rest of the time, you have to repeat one Name only."

Devotee : "Sometimes it happens that I feel like worshipping one avatar for a few days, then another avatar and yet another, though I keep repeating the one Name."

Papa : "It is all right. Continue your worship. All avatars are forms of the same Truth. To climb up a roof you can use a rope or a ladder. Whatever method you adopt, your object is to climb and reach the top and go beyond the rope and ladder."

A student : "What is the best time for prayer, morning or evening?"

Papa : "You must pray whenever you feel like praying. Prayer must give you joy and should not be done as a matter of routine. Your prayer must be intense. It must give you such a divine intoxication as to enable you to carry on your daily activities with great joy and peace. This is the purpose of meditation and prayer."

December 2, 1953

346. **The Vision** Ivorine. Papa had just got up and washed his face. Sriram Trikannad was the first to have Papa's darshan in the morning. When he was talking to Papa, some reference was made to *The Vision*.

Papa : "How do you like the new get-up of *The Vision*?"

Sriram : "It is excellent."

Papa : "What about the contents?"

Sriram : "Devotees like them more nowadays as there are more articles of and about Papa."

Papa : "Were they not reading the other articles in the older issues ?"

Sriram : "It was all dry jnana."

Papa : "Now it is all wet jnana, is it ?"

Sriram : "Papa may better call it sweet jnana."

Papa : "Is it because Ramdas is sweet ? There is a lot of sugar in his blood. So he is sweet, much sweeter than before."

S : "How did Papa get diabetes ?"

Papa : "Because God willed that he should be sweet. Ramdas was at one time very strict in his diet, not for the sake of the body but for controlling the mind. But later he was not strict, as he had nothing like a mind to control. His habits also became sedentary. That might be responsible for the diabetes. Now he has to control his diet to keep down the disease."

347. 11 a.m. Bhajan was over and most of the devotees had left. A few
Go beyond were lingering on, waiting for a chance to talk to Papa alone, if
external possible. It was hard for them to get Papa alone. Papa came to the
worship room followed by a few devotees, one of them a Member of
 Parliament. When Papa sat on the chair they sat at his feet and
started their questions.

M. P. : "In a house, when the wife has devotion to God and has her daily routine of worship and so on, the husband, who is not in favour of a religious life, is annoyed and there is friction. What is she to do then ?"

Papa : "If the husband does not like the wife's external worship of God, the wife should not try to go against him. She can very well take to the mental repetition of God's name and consider that her husband's attitude is only to enable her to go within, giving up the external worship. Sooner or later one has to go beyond the external forms of worship, in order to meditate on the indwelling Reality. In this connection, Ramdas will tell you a story.

"There lived a king and a queen. The queen was a very devout woman, engaged most of the time in the worship of God and repetition of His name. She was happy in every way except that her husband had no devotion to God. She wished

very much that her husband also should have devotion for God. She never saw him sitting for prayers or heard him repeat God's name. So she was unhappy. Thus days and months rolled by.

"One night when the queen woke up from sleep, she heard the king, who was sleeping by her side, uttering 'Ram Ram'. This gave her supreme happiness. To hear her husband repeat God's name was no small joy to her. To celebrate this event, she arranged a grand feast, the next day, with great pomp. When the king found the preparations going on for the unusual festival, he enquired of the queen what the matter was. The queen replied that it was a very important day in her life as she heard him repeat God's name at least in sleep. Hearing this, the king was taken aback. He was sorry because his spiritual discipline which he had so long held a close secret, had now come to light.

"So also a wife can carry on her spiritual practices without parading them. By her faith, in course of time, she might even be able to turn her husband to the Godward path."

348. There was more than the usual rush of devotees in the evening.
Ponnu's It was past 10 o'clock when they all left, and Papa and Mataji
method retired. They were to go to Bhavnagar early next morning.

When Papa went to bed, Bansidharbhai and Navnitbhai sat at his side, massaging his legs, while S. massaged the back.

Bansidharbhai : "Papa has kept us in suspense about that story. When are we going to hear it?"

Papa : "Ramdas will tell you in Ahmedabad."

Bansidharbhai : "It will be three months then."

Papa : "Ramdas shall keep you in suspense till then. This will make you more and ever more eager to hear it."

Bansidharbhai : "Papa, what is that story about?"

Papa : "That is called Ponnu's method. Ramdas first told it to Appibai. But before he told her, he kept Mataji and Appibai in suspense for a long time. Mataji got tired of waiting. But when she heard it from Ramdas, she laughed and laughed. Ramdas then told it to Dada (Butani), but not the solution. He tried for some days to worm it out of Mataji but with no success."

Bansidharbhai : "Whose story is it?"

Papa : "It is a story based on facts."

Bansidharbhai : "Where did it happen ?"

Papa : "Now you are trying to pump it out. Ramdas is not going to tell you now."

S : "What about the scorpion story of Birbal ?"

Papa (*immediately sitting up*) : "That story will make you all laugh and roll on the ground. But Ramdas cannot tell that also at present. It is not for all."

S : "When Papa told it to Mataji she laughed so much that her face turned red."

Bansidharbhai : "Such an interesting story we should all hear, Papa."

Papa : "Not now. Wait for another occasion."

Bhavnagar, December 3, 1953

349. 7-30 a.m. Papa and party left for the aerodrome. The plane took
Departure for off at 8-30 a.m. and reached Bhavnagar at 10 a.m. Anubhai Kamdar,
Bhavnagar son of Gunvantrai Kamdar, accompanied the party from Bombay.
At Bhavnagar they were received by Sumatilal Kamdar, his family
and a number of devotees. They then proceeded straight to Ramdas Ashram.

Papa was told that Sri Bindu Maharaj, a great devotee and exponent of the *Ramayana*, was in Bhavnagar and had been giving pravachan on the *Ramayana* every evening in the spacious Town Hall.

Sumatilal : "Sri Bindu Maharaj was happy when he knew Papa was coming here but was disappointed to learn that Papa was not halting here but going straight to Rajkot. Then he told me that he would come to the aerodrome and have your darshan. Now that you are here for two days, he will have your darshan at the Town Hall."

Papa : "Ramdas would also be happy to have his darshan and hear his pravachan on the *Ramayana*."

350. 4-15 p.m. Papa was at the Town Hall. On the raised platform
Meeting with were arranged a beautiful pedestal in the centre, a sofa to the right,
the Maharaja, and a few chairs to the left. Papa was seated on the sofa. In a few
Bindu minutes the Maharaja Saheb of Bhavnagar came with his family,
Maharaj and garlanded Papa and expressed his joy in having the good fortune of
Sai Sattar Papa's darshan. He and his family took their seats on chairs to the
Shah left. A few minutes later Sri Bindu Maharaj entered and the
Maharaja stood up and bowed down to him with folded hands.
Before Sri Bindu Maharaj came near the seat, Papa also stood up and went forward

to receive him. Seeing that Papa was coming towards him, Sri Bindu Maharaj halted there, and with folded hands requested Papa to take his seat. So Papa could not receive him as he wished to and turned back and took his seat. Sri Bindu Maharaj seated himself on the raised pedestal in the centre. The Maharaja Saheb garlanded him as well.

The pravachan that day was on the tenth of the eleven qualities of Sri Rama. It mainly dealt with love and was quite interesting and elevating.

It was nearly 6-30 p.m. when the pravachan was over, with the usual prayers. Papa and Sri Bindu Maharaj got up and exchanged a few words of joy on meeting each other. Before they left, Sri Bindu Maharaj promised to come over and see Papa at the ashram.

When Papa returned to the ashram, he was happy to hear that Sai Sattar Shah had arrived. Sai Sattar Shah, a Sufi saint, was residing at Rajpipla. Whenever Papa went to Bhavnagar, Sai Sattar Shah would make it a point to go and stay there and take part in the bhajans. He liked Papa's company very much and had the highest regard for him. Papa also respected him very much, found joy in his company, dined with him and made him sit always on a chair at his side.

December 4, 1953

Sri Bindu Maharaj came to Ramdas ashram unexpectedly and stood before Papa. Papa greeted him saying: "Well, you have come! Please take your seat" (*showing the chair nearby.*)

Sri Bindu Maharaj: "I took this opportunity to come and have your darshan."

Papa: "It is very kind of you."

Bindu Maharaj: "No, no, Maharaj! I am fortunate to have your darshan. I had been to Aurobindo Ashram and Ramanashram, but did not get a chance to visit you at your ashram."

Papa: "That is why Ramdas has come to your feet. You are none but Ram Himself. For Ramdas everybody is the form of Ram and he is blissfully moving about like a child. Ram is so gracious that He takes him to places where he can have darshan of saints, and very often saints also come to give him darshan. That is what He has said in *the Gita*: 'Yogakshemam Vahamyaham'."

Bindu Maharaj: "This is what is meant by Atma sakshatkar."

Papa : "Ramdas is coming again this evening to drink the nectar you distribute to all at your pravachan."

Bindu Maharaj took his leave. Papa attended the evening pravachan that day also. At the close Bindu Maharaj and Papa stood up together, and with folded hands bowed to each other.

Papa : "Very happy to hear your pravachan."

Bindu Maharaj : "I was very happy to have your darshan. I am coming here at this time every year and would very much like to be at your service."

They walked together up to the car. Papa got into the car and Sri Bindu Maharaj saw him off.

XXXVII

Bhavnagar, December 5, 1953

351. In 1952 a friend from Bihar had come to Anandashram and stayed
The odd three weeks. He was a school teacher on long leave. He had a
Bihari beard. Though Papa had first agreed to his staying in ashram for a
month, he had to be asked to leave earlier as his behaviour was not
satisfactory. He was highly emotional. One evening, during bhajan, he lay down
on his back shouting 'Mataji, Mataji'. Papa knew that it was nothing but a mere
pretence and, when the bhajan was over, gave him sound advice. He was so much
ashamed that he could not raise his head. Next morning Papa advised him to leave
the ashram. It was reported later that he behaved like a madman at the railway
station. At Erode he was knocked down by a railway engine and was taken by a
Gujarati devotee to his house for treatment. He was later reported to have gone
back to his house. He stayed there a few months and all found him to be out of his
senses ; he suddenly left the place without intimation to his people.

As soon as Papa alighted from the plane at Bhavnagar on the 3rd, he saw the
Bihari in the crowd which had come to receive him. He was in dirty clothes and had
a queer look. Papa recognised him immediately. It was later said that only recently
he had come to Bhavnagar and was staying at the house of a devotee. He had told
them that he was asked by Mataji to wander about. It appeared, during his short
stay there he made himself a nuisance. He created unpleasantness in Ramdas ashram
when Sai Baba's devotees were performing bhajan. He shouted why they should
worship Sai Baba as Papa was all in all and they should worship none else. He had
to be sent away by force from the ashram. Seeing his condition Papa advised him to
go to Girnar and do sadhana.

When the morning bhajan was going on in the ashram, the Bihari started
talking. Among various other things, he said, 'Papa is my Krishna, Rama and Shiva.
Mataji is my Radha, Sita and Parvathi. I am a saguna upasaka and they are my gods.
I had been to Anandashram where Papa scolded me and asked me to get away. In
doing so, he has dishonoured his own devotee. Now Papa asks me to go to Girnar.
Why should I go to Girnar leaving my ishta devata here ? I am not a nirguna upasaka
and have nothing to do with Dattatreya'.

Mataji, who was present, heard the talk and was wondering how Papa could tolerate such things. Seeing Mataji, the Bihari got up and came near her to do namaskar.

Mataji : "Why do you talk like one gone off one's head ?"

Papa asked Sumatilal Kamdar to send him to Girnar with a blanket as it was rather cold there.

352. At 9-30 a.m. Papa and party left Ramdas ashram for the airport,
Devotees emplaned at 10-15 a.m. and landed at Rajkot at 11 a.m.
should consult
Guru's In fact Papa's original plan was to visit no place in Saurashtra
convenience except Bhavnagar, where he could stay for two months so that all devotees from different parts of the state might come and meet him.

At Cannanore railway station, Joshiji had made Papa promise that he would go over to Rajkot for the wedding of his daughter on the 7th December. Besides the preparations for the marriage function, Joshiji had made elaborate arrangements for bhajans to be held for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening. A huge shamiana had been erected where thousands of people could comfortably sit during the bhajan.

Knowing that Papa was coming for the wedding on the 7th, Master Vasant took the opportunity to request him to stay on at Rajkot, so that he could be present on the occasion of the wedding of his adopted daughter to be celebrated on the 9th. Having planned to be there till the 8th, Papa agreed to continue till the 10th.

Narottam Shah was to celebrate the marriage of his son Champak on the 11th in Bombay. He pressed Papa to be kind enough to grace the occasion with his presence. He further suggested that Papa could fly from Rajkot to Bombay on the 10th and return to Bhavnagar on the 12th. Papa agreed.

Papa was received at the Rajkot aerodrome by Upendra Bhatt, Joshiji, the big party that had come with him from Cannanore, and a number of Rajkot devotees. Papa had decided to stay with Upendra Bhatt as on the earlier occasion.

A short time after Papa's arrival at Upendra Bhatt's, he was apprised of the programmes of bhajan and talks during his stay at Rajkot, by Jivanlal Bhatt and Hiralal Pandya (Upendra Bhatt's father and uncle). Arjunbhai Patel and Madhavram Raval were also with them. While the talk was going on Arjunbhai and Madhavram got up, came to the room where Mataji was arranging things and said : "Mataji, Papa must spend two hours in the Bhajan-ashram. How can it be arranged ?"

Mataji : "You must ask Papa himself."

Arjunbhai : "If you agree, only then we can ask Papa."

Mataji : "I have nothing to say about the programme. Papa decides these things himself. You ask Papa. If he agrees, it is all right."

They then went to Papa again and Arjunbhai opened the topic.

Arjunbhai : "Papa, kindly come any day to the Bhajanashram for two hours, so that we can have bhajan there and all those near about can have Papa's darshan."

Papa : "No, Ramdas will not be able to go out anywhere on visits. You must excuse him. His health is not so good as to enable him to knock about as before."

Arjunbhai : "You are not staying there as you did last time. At least spend two hours with us there."

Papa : "You people do not seem to take into consideration the state of Ramdas's health at all. You are only interested in taking him here and there. If you have real love for Ramdas you would have said Ramdas should not be asked to go out anywhere and those who wanted darshan might come here. Last time when Ramdas decided to stay at Upendra Bhatt's place, instead of at the Bhajanashram, you got so wild that you spoke some hot words and did not even come to see Ramdas daily. This should not be the attitude of devotees. You should be happy to see that Ramdas is well looked after. You know what inconveniences he had while staying at the Bhajanashram climbing up and down and going to different buildings in the hot sun for meals, etc. You see, all conveniences are provided for him here. You should not get angry."

Arjunbhai : "I am not angry."

Papa : "You were angry last time."

Arjunbhai : "Yes, I was. Now I am talking on behalf of other devotees who will have the chance of Papa's darshan there."

Papa : "However, you should not get angry. Feel happy. Get all devotees here for meeting Ramdas. All conveniences are here."

Arjunbhai : "All right, Papa."

In the evening, Chakubhai who is in charge of the Bhajanashram, came to meet Papa. He sat at Papa's feet and, in the course of the conversation, requested Papa to visit the Bhajanashram.

Chakubhai : "Papa, what about visiting Bhajanashram for some time?"

Papa : "No, you must excuse Ramdas. He cannot go out as before. His health is not very good."

Chakubhai : "Papa, if your health does not permit you to come, it does not matter. We are happy to have your darshan. I am satisfied, seeing your smiling face here."

Joshiji came to meet Papa in the afternoon. Referring to him later, Papa remarked to S. : "Joshiji is so full of joy. He prattles like a child. His joy in having us here is so great that he moves about in ecstasy."

353. 8-30 p.m. Papa was in the big hall at Upendra Bhatt's house and about fifty devotees sat in front of him.
Bhajan
in sleep

One devotee : "I do bhajan and kirtan during the day. I often do bhajan during sleep also. Is it good or is it a weakness of the mind? While doing bhajan in sleep, I even stand up and then suddenly come to consciousness."

Papa : "How do you know that you do bhajan in sleep and sit up?"

Devotee : "I wake up and see myself sitting or standing and doing bhajan. Then I surmise that I must have been doing bhajan in sleep also."

Another devotee : "He is repeating a lakh of mantras everyday."

Papa : "What mantra are you repeating?"

Devotee : "Sitaram Ram Ram."

Papa : "How do you count the mantra?"

Devotee : "As three—Sitaram; Ram; Ram. I was repeating only the name 'Ram'. But somebody suggested that I should add 'Sita' also. So I am repeating this mantra now."

Papa : "Why add 'Sita' to the mantra that you repeat? Valmiki repeated only 'Ram', that too in the reverse order."

354. Devotee : "In dream I get vision of saints. What does this mean?"
Purity of
mind essential Papa : "You may get the vision of saints and avatars in dream. But what is the state of your mind? Is it free from vasanas? To attain any spiritual experience means, first to be in control of your mind. Ramnam must destroy all the vasanas and make the mind pure. One may repeat the Name, dance, weep or jump in ecstasy and see visions, but unless one has mental purity, one

has attained nothing. Vasanas must completely go or there should be signs of their leaving the mind, at least gradually. Without purity of mind one cannot attain God-realisation."

Another devotee : "His mind is free from vikaras."

Papa : "Why do you talk on his behalf ? Are you his wakil ? You cannot talk about his experiences." *(To the devotee)* "Are your vasanas destroyed completely ?"

Devotee : "Not completely, but their power is less."

Papa : "Have you come up to the satva guna ? Are you keeping a watch on your mind ? The task of the sadhaka is to keep a strict watch over the movements of his mind, to find how far the mind is free of desires and what it runs after. While on the path, one may get this vision or that, but that is all nothing. The most important thing is purity of mind. There may be lurking within, desires to enjoy worldly things, desire for the other sex and for many such pleasures. Watch and see if these desires are getting less and less with your sadhana. What is the goal of your life ? It must be nothing less than God-realisation."

Devotee : "Yes, it is God-realisation."

355. Papa : "By the purification of the mind alone you will be able to
Bhakti obtain higher spiritual experience. So, the fundamental thing is
should be mental purity. Constant remembrance of God by the repetition of
nishkama His name, and selfless service will enable you to attain purification.
Do you keep the mantra in your mind constantly ? If your mind
thinks of the world more than it does of God, pray to God in all humility to destroy
the vasanas of the mind and make it absolutely pure. This is the purpose of sadhana.

"Those who constantly repeat Ram mantra automatically get the contact of saints ; and proper meditation and everything else that is necessary for their spiritual progress ensue. Unflinching faith is an important condition for progress on the path, and secondly your bhakti should be nishkama (desireless). If you do sadhana of sakama bhakti (devotion in order to satisfy worldly desires), whatever you gain spiritually will be spent for the fulfilment of these desires and you will remain where you are.

"In this connection Ramdas remembers a fine example given by Sri Ramakrishna. A farmer was watering his fields from a well. He worked for four or five hours, to find at last that his fields were as dry as ever before. Inspecting the connecting water channel, he noticed that there was a big hole in it made by rats and the water that was to flow to the fields was all drained away through this rat-hole. Our desires

for worldly things are the rat-holes which swallow all the fruits of our sadhana. In other words, the power that is gained is used up for the fulfilment of worldly desires.

“Now Ramdas has given you a touchstone. Test your experience and find out what state you have attained. You can find out what the state of your mind is. You can know for yourself where you stand.”

356. Devotee: “When I hear *the Ramayana* read I am so moved that
Control I find it difficult to sit there. I generally get up and walk away. Is
emotions it a weakness of the mind?”

Papa: “Pray to God not to make you absorbed in prem. Tell Him that you have to hear *the Ramayana* and ask Him for strength not to be overpowered by emotion. What you describe is one of the eight bhavas. It is good. But it has to be controlled and got over. When you are not able to stop it, to pray to God is the only way. Do not allow yourself to be carried away by emotions. By these you may realise great joy and even have some experience of bhava-samadhi (*a state of trance*), but beware, when you come down you will be just as before.”

357. A devotee: “Are we to keep a picture of God for concentration?
External If so, what form?”
aids to
sadhana Papa: “What is your ishta?”

Devotee: “Anandamayee.”

Papa: “Keep her picture before you and concentrate.”

Devotee: “How long are we to keep going to temples and other places of pilgrimage for spiritual progress?”

Papa: “As long as you are unable to go within yourself and see God there. You must see the inner light divine shining within you. Till then you may have to visit temples and so on. Even if you are asked not to go to temples, you will go because your god is only in temples and in places of pilgrimage. You must make a temple of yourself, enshrining God in your heart.

358. “As long as you have the sense of ego you cannot realise the
Ego, the presence of God within you. You must have heard the story of a
greatest bhakta who was praying to God to reveal himself. After many years
obstacle God appeared before him. The devotee was not satisfied with the
 external darshan. He prayed to the Lord to reveal Himself in his
heart. The Lord then replied, ‘I was trying to manifest Myself in your heart, but

there is already one there—your 'I' or ego-sense. As soon as you turn him out I can enthrone Myself in your heart.' The ego-sense is the greatest obstacle which prevents one from seeing God in one's heart.

"While talking about ego-sense or abhiman, Ramdas remembers the story of Hiranyakasipu as narrated by Shri Bindu Maharaj yesterday at the town hall in Bhavnagar. It seems Hiranyakasipu proud of his great strength, went to Vaikuntha in order to defeat Vishnu in fight. Hiranyakasipu did not however see Vishnu anywhere and returned saying that he had defeated Vishnu. On the way, he met Rishi Narada and told him what he had done. Narada went to Vaikuntha and meeting Vishnu there asked Him where He had disappeared when Hiranyakasipu came to attack him. Vishnu replied He had hid Himself in Hiranyakasipu's heart. Hiranyakasipu's ego was so large that his head was always turned upward and would never bend down. So his heart was the safest place for Vishnu to hide in. The moral is : Unless one bends one's head down, one cannot see God in one's heart. Bending down means subdual of the ego and being humble."

359. A devotee : "I have great discontentment and therefore I am
Discontent always restless."
with spiritual
progress Papa : "For spiritual progress or material things?"
beneficial

Devotee : "For spiritual progress."

Papa : "Discontentment for spiritual progress is all right and will enable you to move forward on the divine path. But you must have contentment in your material life. You must be satisfied with whatever God gives you. If you are contented with your spiritual progress before you reach the goal, you will stagnate."

Rajkot, December 6, 1953

360. Upendra Bhatt's residence. On the way back from the bhajan at
Develop Saraswat Boarding at 10-45 a.m., Papa visited the house of Mr. Shah
witness- (Chief Justice) who was in bed with heart trouble. He was very
consciousness happy and cheerful when Papa went near his bed and asked, "How
 are you?"

Shah : "Swamiji, I need your blessings."

Papa : "Ramdas has come here only for giving you that. You will be all right by God's grace."

Shah : "How long will you be staying in Bhavnagar ?"

Papa : "Until the end of January."

Shah : "I should like to come there."

Papa : "You must get well and come there."

Shah : "Swamiji, even when I am lying down I am not able to think of God. My mind is wandering and there is no concentration, as my body is ailing. What can I do ?"

Papa : "When the mind is wandering, you must be a witness to it and watch its movements. When you say your mind is wandering, you are different from the mind. When you say, 'This is my coat, this my shirt, this is my body', and so on, you assert that you are not the coat, shirt or the body or even the mind. So, develop this witness-consciousness. Your real nature is Absolute Bliss."

361. Before Papa went to the hall for talks, he asked a young man,
Do not waiting for a private talk, to come in and asked others to wait
neglect outside for a while.
studies

The young man was a B. Com. student. He handed over to Papa a few question papers of the last examination and his answer papers. Papa glanced through them and found that the answer papers contained no answer to the questions but only Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, and the marks given him were zero.

Papa : "Why did you not answer the questions ?"

Student : "I could not answer them. My mind is not in study. I want to dedicate my life to God. I want to repeat Ramnam constantly."

Papa : "You may repeat Ramnam. What prevents you from answering the examination papers? Are you not doing all other things—eating, sleeping, bathing and so on? You must study well, appear for the next examination and pass. This is no good, neglecting your studies. Your parents may be spending a lot of money on your education. You must pass your examination. If you give up your studies, do you think you can repeat Ramnam for the whole day? Your mind will be wandering here and there and you will take up some other work. So, continue your studies and repeat Ramnam during all your leisure hours."

The student placed his head at Papa's feet, shed tears and left the place agreeing to follow the advice.

362.

**How to
still the
mind**

3 to 4 p.m. There was a fairly large gathering for the talks.

One devotee : "How to still the mind ?"

Papa : "What do you gain by repeating Ramnam ? How does it help you in stilling the mind ? By constant repetition of Ramnam the mind gets purified and becomes one-pointed. By one-pointedness the Divine within is awakened and shines within. By the awakening of the Divine within you, wavering of the mind becomes less and less and thus it can be brought under perfect control. Till then it is the mind that controls you. The power necessary to gain mastery over the mind comes through Ramnam. Now you are the servant of the mind. Ramnam will make you master of the mind and servant of Ram. The best practice to stop the mind's fickleness is to disobey whatever the mind wants you to do."

Devotee : "How can we get the power to disobey the mind's promptings ?"

Papa : "It is gained by the repetition of Ramnam and also by the help of the Divine that is awakened within you. Another method is to be a witness of the mind. Watch the mind and its movements. The mind will then become still."

363.

**Realise
nirguna and
saguna**

Devotee : "Should we realise the nirguna or saguna aspect of God ?"

Papa : "Both."

Devotee : "Nirguna and saguna are opposites. Are they not ?"

Papa : "No, they are like the sun and its rays. The rays are not different from the sun. Nirguna is the changeless and formless Spirit and saguna is the manifestation ; they are like sun and its rays. The nirguna is beyond the intellect to comprehend. That is why He is called achintyarupa. He is the purusha. He is also the prakriti. He is purusha and prakriti together and also beyond both, and is called Purushottama."

364.

**What is
moksha ?**

Devotee : "What is moksha or liberation ?"

Papa : "It is freedom from the bondage of kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya ; and from birth and death."

Devotee : "Does one who has attained moksha take birth later ?"

Papa : "He has no rebirth. The seed of vasanas in him is completely burnt up."

365. Devotee: "What is savikalpa samadhi and what is nirvikalpa samadhi?"
The different kinds of samadhis

Papa: "Savikalpa samadhi is that state when one sees the effulgent form of God, and enjoys divine ecstasy. Nirvikalpa samadhi is that state when you have transcended all names and forms and you lose your little self in the nameless, formless and changeless being of God. So, savikalpa samadhi is saguna sakshatkar and is within the three gunas. Nirvikalpa samadhi is nirguna sakshatkar and is beyond the gunas.

"There is still a higher state in which you remain in the nirvikalpa samadhi and at the same time behold the whole universe as the form of God. One who is in this state, realising his oneness with the Eternal, lives and moves like a child seeing his Beloved everywhere. This is called sahaja samadhi."

366. Devotee: "Which of the paths is the best?"
Follow the triune path

Papa: "Man has intellect, heart and body. He should use the intellect for vichara, that is he should discriminate between the real and the unreal so as to give up attachment to the unreal or the perishable things of the world, and meditate on the Real. In the heart he should develop love and devotion for God. With the body he must perform selfless work. Unselfish work will purify his mind, help his meditation and increase his devotion to God.

"All these three practices must go together. This is called the triune path. There are people who take to any one of these and leave the other two. This is not good. It will be like exercising one part of the body and developing that part only to the exclusion of the rest. That would result in asymmetrical growth."

367. A girl student: "To control the indriyas, is suppression the only way?"
Sublimation, not suppression

Papa: "No, transformation or sublimation is the way. Suppression will have dangerous effects. You must divinise all the vrittis (mental dynamics). Then the path is easy for you."

368. A devotee: "What importance are we to give to penances like fasting and so on?"
Purpose of fasting

Papa: "Do observe the penance of fasting whenever necessary. Such a discipline helps you to keep the body clean, alert and free from disease. With a

heavy stomach you cannot do meditation or bhajan. But certain people, while fasting, cannot but think of food. The purpose of fasting is to enable one to have proper meditation and bhajan. So, mere fasting for its own sake won't do. It must be observed for successful bhajan or meditation."

369.

A devotee : "What is the result of God-realisation ?"

**God-
realisation,
a state of
ineffable
bliss**

Papa : "The result is constant joy. One who has realised God has no worries or anxieties. He sees his own Self everywhere and in everything and remains ever blissful. His 'I' and 'mine' have gone and he has equal vision. This is the highest state or realisation and none can describe the state of bliss he enjoys."

370.

A devotee : "What do you think of rebirth ?"

**Do not worry
about rebirth**

Papa : "Ramdas does not worry about rebirth and he asks others also to do likewise. Do whatever you have to do, now and today.

Do not think about future birth and so on."

Devotee : "Papa has reached a state in which he does not have to worry about rebirth. As we have not reached that state we have to know something about it."

Papa : "Then you must try to reach that state in which you have not to worry about it. Think of the Eternal, live in the Eternal, move in the Eternal and be the Eternal, past, present and future are all false; so also yesterday, today and tomorrow. If a bird that is caught and put in a cage thinks: 'How did I come here? How many bars has this cage?' It will ever remain in the cage and there will be no escape from it. It has to struggle and find its way out. So, our business here is to work out our liberation and not to worry over past or future births.

"It is man's nature to regret the past, worry about the present and be afraid of the future. Give up the thought of the past, present and future. Dwell in the Eternal."

371.

Devotee : "Is atman karta or bhokta ?"

**Atma is
neither karta
nor bhokta**

Papa : "Atman is neither karta nor bhokta. Atman is a pure witness of prakriti which is His own manifestation. He is unaffected by the play of prakriti. He sanctions her play and witnesses it. Prakriti is active in the light of purusha or atman. As soon as the purusha withdraws

his sanction prakriti dissolves in purusha. You have seen, with the sanction of the Raja, groups of girls dance in his presence and he simply witnesses the dance. As soon as the Raja leaves his seat, the girls stop dancing and go away."

372. Devotee : "Many young people do not believe in prayer but scoff at those who pray."
Prayer arises at the right time Papa : "They will pray when they are in trouble. Then they will cry : 'O God, save me'."

Devotee : "Should they not be compelled to pray ?"

Papa : "No use compelling anybody. Mataji was studying in a school, Second or Third standard, and one day the teacher scolded her. She never more attended school. She flatly refused to go. Of course, she is none the worse for it. She says she would not have attained her present state had she continued her studies."

373. A girl student : "Sometimes I am for doing good acts. But next moment my mind is after lower pleasure. Why this conflict ?"
Value of satsang

Papa : "There are two minds : One is the higher and the other the lower. The higher mind prompts you to do good deeds and the lower mind drags you down. By satsang your higher mind always prevails and your desire for sense-pleasures disappears."

Devotee : "How to get contact of saints ?"

Papa : "By God's grace."

Devotee : "Can we not force young men to go to saints ?"

Papa : "No use at all. They must have the necessary thirst for God and then they will aspire for the contact of a saint and derive benefit. Sri Ramakrishna had a devotee going to him daily. The devotee was anxious that some of his friends also should have the benefit of Sri Ramakrishna's contact. The friends were not willing, but at his pressure two of them agreed to accompany him to Sri Ramakrishna. They sat before Sri Ramakrishna who talked to them of God. They listened for sometime with seeming interest but soon got tired of the talk and started poking the devotee from behind, whispering to him that they would like to get away. When the devotee did not heed them, they got up, told him they would wait for him outside, and went away and waited in the boat, gossiping about worldly things till the devotee left Sri Ramakrishna and joined them. This is what happens if you force satsang on those who do not want it.

**Three types
of people**

"There are three types of people. Some are like mudworms. The nature of mudworms is to live on dirt alone. If they are removed from dirt to a cleaner place they feel uncomfortable and struggle to get back to dirt. Another sort is like the houseflies. One moment houseflies sit on dirt and enjoy. Next moment they may sit on sweets and enjoy equally. The last type is like honey-bees which sit only on flowers, suck honey and never settle on dirt.

"People who are like mudworms are always immersed in the worldly mire and are averse to satsang. If they come into contact with saints they feel restless and go away. The housefly type of people are happy when they enjoy sense-pleasures. They are also happy in the company of saints. The honey-bee type of persons are real devotees who like only satsang and do not desire worldly pleasures.

"Ramdas remembers a humorous incident in this connection. When he was in Bombay many years ago, a Parsi girl used to visit him. The first day she came at 4 o'clock with her friends. Thereafter she used to come everyday alone exactly at 4 o'clock and sit near Ramdas to hear his talks. One day when she came as usual at 4 o'clock Ramdas told a story.

"There was a sadhu living in a forest. He was given to the habit of taking opium. One day when he was taking opium a peacock came and peeped inside. The sadhu made a small pill of opium and gave it to the peacock, which it swallowed, got intoxicated and danced with joy. The next day at the same time it was there again looking for the pill. The sadhu gave it another pill. So everyday at that particular time the peacock came to the sadhu.

"Ramdas told the Parsi girl that she was the peacock who got intoxicated by Ramdas's talk on the first day and thereafter was coming everyday exactly at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. From that day, whenever she came, Ramdas would say, 'The peacock has come.'

"Another day, when she was present, Ramdas spoke about the three types of minds—mudworm, housefly and honey-bee. As soon as Ramdas finished, this girl got up and said: 'I am like the housefly. Do you know why? I enjoyed your talks here on spiritual subjects. Now I am going to a film show.' Ramdas laughed and all those present there broke into a loud laugh."

XXXVIII

Rajkot, December 7, 1953

375. Upendra Bhatt's residence. Papa was alone with S. when a young couple entered the room. They were B. N. Roy and his wife, of Saurashtra residing in South Africa who had recently come from there. Both of them sat before Papa. Roy had been in touch with Papa through correspondence. He was a young man of thirtythree years and his wife was twentyfive years old.

Roy explained to Papa how he was carrying on his sadhana and how his wife was co-operating with him.

Roy : "Swamiji, though my wife is not much after worldly things, she wants to have two children."

Papa : "Ah, she wants to be a mother. It is natural. Be satisfied with one child. Let that be the limit. By having too many children you will be caught in the maze of the world."

Mrs. Roy : "One will do, Swamiji. We will be satisfied with that."

Roy : "Is a life of brahmacharya possible ?"

Papa : "For you at this age and in your circumstances it will be difficult. Brahmacharya is not mere physical continence. It must be mental also. Mere physical control is harmful. One should be pure in mind like a child."

Roy : "I am happy to say that my wife is not at all sex-mad. My desire for sex is more than hers. So she is not at all an obstacle."

Papa : "You are right. Ramdas has seen that women can control the sex-desire better than men."

Roy : "What should I do to control this desire ?"

Papa : "It requires intense sadhana. Your mind must be made to dwell always in God."

Roy : "Will control of food help?"

Papa : "Food helps to some extent, but not fully. By sadhana alone one will be able to control it, but eradication of the desire is more difficult. It is possible only on Self-realisation. However, you can start with physical control by mutual understanding. This is not an one-sided matter. Both have to co-operate. Brahmacharya is good for health, concentration and progress on the spiritual path. You may rest assured no spiritual progress is possible without brahmacharya. Absolute control by thought and deed is necessary. The more you lose the vital fluid the more your mind becomes restless. The less you waste it, the better your control of the mind."

Roy : "Should I spend sometime in solitude?"

Papa : "Solitude is helpful. What is more important is the company of saints. Whenever possible, court their company. That will help you a good lot. Take God's name constantly. There are no restrictions for it. It is meant for the most civilised as also for the most uncivilised. Do not give up Ramnam on any account. Worldly engagements should not stand in the way of your sadhana."

Mrs. Roy then spoke about some of her domestic difficulties. Papa gave her some advice and asked her to solve the problems with love and compromise.

Papa : "Ramdas has explained to you everything. Now he must get ready for the next programme—talks. If you want to listen to the talks you may go and sit in the hall there."

376. After the evening bhajan at Saraswat Boarding, Papa and Mataji
Blessing were led by Joshiji to the marriage pandal to bless the bride and the
a couple bridegroom. They spent a few minutes there, when the rituals were
 in progress. The couple garlanded them and had their blessings.
Then Joshiji allowed Papa and Mataji to leave.

Mataji : "Bring some sweets and ask Papa to take at least a bit."

Joshiji was happy at the suggestion of Mother. Someone ran in and brought sugarcandy. Papa took a small piece, Mataji another, and the rest was distributed to those present.

377. 7-30 p.m. Papa was back at Upendra Bhatt's house and after his
Rebirth after evening milk was pacing the large room. S. was with him.
moksha

S : "Papa said in the talks yesterday that for one who attained moksha, there is no rebirth. Does this answer not require further clarification?"

Papa : "He may take birth again for helping humanity. That is left to God's will. But it is quite different from the ordinary birth in the state of bondage."

S : "When Papa says 'he' may come again, is there any trace of 'he' left on the attainment of moksha? Is moksha not the final dissolution of individuality?"

Papa : "Not necessarily final dissolution, but surely there is the dissolution of the lower individuality. A subtle type of higher individuality is maintained."

S : "In that case, does it not go against the principle of advaita?"

Papa : "Ramdas is not a pure advaitin. He believes in the co-existence of dvaita and advaita. The jivanmukta retains his higher subtle individuality; he moves about and acts in the world realising that he and God are one. Ramdas in this body is active and doing things. Whatever he may do, he is at the same time conscious that he is the eternal and all-pervading Reality. So, in that state there is separation and unity simultaneously."

S : "Is there no state when the jivanmukta can lose his individuality in the One and be free of birth?"

Papa : "That is possible. That is what the jnanis do. They do not believe in the existence of the higher individuality at all. As soon as the lower individuality is dissolved, they cease to exist as separate entities. There cannot be any rebirth for them. Sankaracharya was one of that type."

378.
**The best
way to
control
the mind**

It was 8-30 p.m. Jivanlal Bhatt (Upendra Bhatt's father) came to inform Papa that it was time for the programme of talks and that a few devotees were waiting in the hall. In a few minutes Papa was there, talking to the devotees.

A devotee : "What is the best way to control the mind?"

Papa : "By vichara or discrimination you should distinguish the Real from the unreal, the Imperishable from the perishable. The perishable and changing nature of the world attracts you so much, but does not give you any peace. So, instead of involving yourself in the impermanent and changing things, attune your mind always to the Real—the imperishable Truth. Attachment to the perishable brings distraction and sorrow.

"To detach the mind from worldly objects, vairagya or dispassion is necessary. Without vairagya the mind will repeatedly run after worldly objects and you cannot have any concentration on God. To control the mind you should constantly direct it towards the divine. This requires continuous practice.

379. "When Ramdas started sadhana, he had only a faint idea of the
Infinite joy joy he would get by attaining God-vision and experience. But after
of God- attainment he finds that the bliss he is experiencing is a million
vision times more than what he had imagined it would be. He feels that
even thousands of lives sacrificed for attaining this state are nothing
at all. When Ramdas sees people pursuing the petty pleasures of the world, without
aspiring for this wonderful experience, he is really sorry for them. The human beings
alone are fit to realise this Truth. Why should they not put forth all their efforts to
attain this spiritual perfection?

"Realising Him, you must remain His child. There is joy in it. It is not that
one should simply lose oneself in Him. You must be a child and play with Him.
There is no joy in merely becoming sugar. You must also be like an ant enjoying the
taste of it."

380. A devotee: "What is it that stands in the way of our realising
Transcending Him?"
the gunas

Papa: "There are three screens. One is transparent, the second is red and
the third dark. The transparent screen is called satva guna, the red one is rajas and
the dark is tamas. By sadhana you must tear up these screens one by one; first the
dark screen of tamas, then the red one of rajas. When these two are gone you are
almost face to face with the divine as there is only the transparent screen of satva
between you and the divine. Having reached this state many think they have
reached the goal and stop practice. As soon as sadhana is given up, the red and
dark screens again come up and block the way and it takes a long time to remove
them. So, intense and ceaseless sadhana should continue even after one has
reached suddhasatva. Then alone can the final screen be removed and you will
realise your oneness with the divine by transcending the three gunas."

December 9, 1953

381. 7-30 a.m. Jivanlal Bhatt and Hiralal Pandya were sitting in front
Realisation of Papa. Jivanlal was never tired of expressing his gratitude to
not a mental Papa for his visit to Rajkot and stay with Upendra Bhatt. Just then
state. Upendra Bhatt also joined the group.

Papa: "The marriage for which Ramdas came here seems to be only an excuse. There is some other purpose behind the visit. After all, he spent only a few minutes at the marriage pandal, whereas four hours of bhajan and two to three hours of talks are going on daily here."

9-30 p.m. After the usual questions and answers, Jayantilal Jobanputra, his brother, Upendra Bhatt and others followed Papa to his room and sat near him.

Jobanputra: "Yesterday Mr. Vyas (District Judge) wanted to ask Papa a question. He was hesitating. We discussed the question between ourselves; he is not satisfied with what I said. His question is: 'Is realisation not merely a state of mind arrived at by rational thinking'?"

Papa: "Realisation is something far beyond the scope of the mind. Mind has limits and one who is still groping in the mental region, is under limitations. One has to go beyond all limitations set by the mind and live in the infinite Existence."

Jobanputra: "Is the mind not used for the purpose?"

Papa: "Of course, the mind does help you to a certain extent. But the mental activities have to be finally stopped or the mind stilled. Realisation is an experience of the Absolute and is not a mental state."

382. Jobanputra: "How can bhakti bring about realisation then? It is
Vichara, said jnana alone can give liberation to one. So vichara must be
bhakti, the path and not bhakti."
intuition

Papa: "What is bhakti after all? It is like this. First you begin to discriminate the Real from unreal—atma-anatma vichara: give up all thoughts about the anatman or transitory objects and attune yourself to the formless, nameless, changeless (*i. e., nirguna*) atman or brahman. As the mind cannot meditate on the attributeless brahman, the bhaktas give it a form and worship it. Through the worship of form you reach the formless. Thus both vichara and bhakti lead to jnana."

Jobanputra: "What is intuition?"

Papa: "Intuition is the outcome of the harmony of an illumined intellect and a purified heart. In whatever way intuition prompts you to act, you are always right. The world may criticise your actions; you won't heed it and you will have no regret."

Bombay, December 10, 1953

383. Papa left Rajkot at 11 a.m., reached Bombay at 1-30 p.m. and drove to the residence of Trasi Sundar Rao at Khar.

**Papa with
brother and
sister**

Papa came to know that Padukone Narasinga Rao (*Papa's eldest brother*) who was ill was anxious to meet Papa. Papa thought of sending a car to bring him to Khar but before that Narasinga Rao himself came in, gave a couple of oranges and prostrated. He was very weak and having fever also. His daughter-in-law accompanied him.

Papa : "We were thinking of sending a car to pick you up from your home. How did you come now?"

N. Rao : "We came by bus. I was so anxious to see you that I thought of hurrying up as early as possible. I do not know if I will be able to see you again. I am eightythree now. My health is failing."

Papa : "Is she (referring to his wife who had passed away a few months back) calling you up there?" (*Pointing upwards*).

N. Rao had a hearty laugh in which others also joined.

N. Rao : "She calls me from there, but I ask her to wait."

Papa : "Perhaps she is feeling lonely without you."

N. Rao : "May be. That is why she is calling me. Next time when you come, I may or may not be living."

Papa : "May or may not be. It is not in our hands."

N. Rao : "She (*his wife*) had a wonderful death. She had absolutely no trouble. One afternoon she said she was feeling heavy in the head. Next moment she sat down, repeated Ramnam and left the body. For the whole day I am also repeating Ramnam with japamala in hand. Whenever there is some pain in the body, remembrance of God comes automatically. So, at the time of death I hope He will give me also His remembrance."

After a few more minutes of jolly conversation, Papa and Mataji started for the residence of Narottamdas Shah in Matunga, to see the latter's wife who was seriously ill. The next day being the day of Champak's marriage, Narottamdas was anxious to see that she was rid of her illness so that the marriage function might go off smoothly.

Papa took Narasinga Rao and his daughter-in-law in the same car, dropped them at their house, and proceeded to Matunga.

Papa spent an hour at Narottam's house. His wife was too ill to get up. But when she was told that Papa had come, she collected all her strength and came out of the room and bowed at Papa's feet. She was persuaded to lie down and Papa and Mataji sat near her cot. She was happy that Papa had come to bless her son Champak and his bride. She felt sure the wedding would go off smoothly and by Papa's blessings she would be able to attend the function.

Leaving the house, Papa went to the residence of Chandrashekhar B. Trikannad, where lived his mother, Lakshmi Devi (Papa's sister). She was too old to move about and was anxious to meet Papa. She was immensely happy to receive Papa and Mataji. She expressed her eagerness to live at Anandashram. Dissuading her, Papa said that it would be better for her to remain in Bombay as she would feel very lonely when they (Papa and Mataji) were on tour, and as they were coming to Bombay often, she could meet them.

Khar, December 11, 1953

384. Papa and Mataji left Khar at 11 a.m. for lunch at Narottamdas's
Celibacy place and returned at 1-30 p.m. In the evening they went for
and women Champak's wedding function at Madhav Baugh to bless the couple.

A girl student of the intermediate class had been corresponding with Papa about the problems of life. Papa last wrote to her a long letter expressing his views as well as those of Mataji. She was with Papa that afternoon for about an hour.

The girl : "Papa, I could not clearly understand your last letter."

Papa : "In that Ramdas had made it clear that if you want to remain unmarried and lead a pure celibate's life, and at the same time have all the ambitions of life fulfilled—like becoming a doctor and so on—that is not possible. If you have worldly ambitions, lead a worldly life. Otherwise you must be prepared to renounce all worldly connections as Mataji did, and dedicate your life to God. Then alone absolute celibacy is possible. In the world there is many a temptation for an unmarried woman, and she is apt to fall."

The girl : "Are there not such temptations even in married life?"

Papa : "In married life you do not go astray so easily. Your association with your partner will give you no room for disorderly conduct and you will be leading a controlled, happy and peaceful life."

The girl : "I dread the possibility of bearing children."

Papa: "If you want to enjoy sense-pleasures you must naturally bear the after-effects. When there is pleasure there is also sorrow. That is what you get in worldly life. If you give up everything and dedicate your life to God, you must boldly walk the path. Mataji did it and she never turned to worldly pleasures again. You must know brahmacharya is a state of perfect purity of mind. It is not merely physical control. Many unmarried women living the worldly life may not remain chaste and yet may pose to be leading a pure life—so also men may fail in the observance of brahmacharya. So, to lead an unmarried life in the world is like fighting against temptations in the open, and married life is like fighting from within a fort, as Sri Ramakrishna puts it."

The girl: "Papa, I think of you often, but why is it that I see only Mataji in the dream?"

Papa: "Because we are both one."

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, December 12, 1953

385. Papa was back from Bombay by plane. He was to stay till the end of January.
Don't insult saints

The ashram was constructed by Gunvantrai Kamdar. Papa had come for the opening of the ashram in March that year. The opening ceremony was grand and a large number of devotees came from various parts of the country. The devotees there expressed their desire that Papa should stay at the new ashram two or three months every year. The object was to enable the devotees of Saurashtra to have his darshan and company every year, and to save Papa the strain of going from place to place in Saurashtra.

Gunvantrai Kamdar and his brother Sumatilal Kamdar had arranged for all conveniences in the ashram for Papa's stay and also for the devotees who would come for Papa's darshan. All were provided with food from one kitchen. Sumatilal Kamdar had made these arrangements nicely, to the minutest detail. A large number of devotees gathered for bhajan morning and evening and one hour was set apart every afternoon for satsang—question and answer session.

A couple of hours after Papa's arrival, the Bihari, who was asked to go to Girnar, came inside the ashram compound but was prevented by the gate-keeper from entering the ashram hall. In the afternoon, when Papa was in the hall, he suddenly dashed in and fell at Papa's feet. By then Papa had received all the information about him. After Papa's departure to Rajkot, Sumatilal Kamdar gave

him a blanket and some money and asked him to go to Girnar as instructed by Papa. But he threw away the blanket and money and had a few hot words with Sumatilal. He had then disappeared for two days. When asked why he returned, he replied, "I had been to Girnar. There is nothing there. I want only Papa and Mataji. I cannot live away from them."

After prostrating at Papa's feet he was standing and gazing at Papa's face.

Papa (*gravely*): "Why did you come back from Girnar?"

Bihari: "I did not find anything there. I wanted to obey you and went with the idea of staying there, but something pulls me back to you. How can I live away from you and Mataji? I have no control over myself. Some strange power has taken possession of me. I will stay on here with you and follow you wherever you go."

Papa: "Nothing doing. We cannot permit one like you to stay with us. You may have love for us, but you abuse and insult those who love Ramdas. Is this the way you love Ramdas? You had angry words with Sumatilal. The other day you spoke in insulting terms about Sai Sattar Shah and Bindu Maharaj. How can you spiritually progress if you go on insulting saints? Ramdas cannot permit you to stay here."

Bihari: "Where can I go?"

Papa: "How and where did you live all these days? Carry on like that."

Papa then came in and the Bihari went out. He was, of course, provided with food at proper time, but was not allowed to enter the hall. He spent his time outside the ashram waiting for an opportunity to force himself in.

386. 8-30 p.m. This was the time for question and answer. The Initiation by bhajan-hall was half full.

Guru more effective

A devotee: "Is there any difference between the mantra given by a saint and that taken by oneself without any initiation?"

Papa: "When the Guru gives you initiation, he imparts spiritual power to you with the mantra. You miss this otherwise. This is Ramdas's experience. Before he was initiated, he was repeating 'Ram, Ram'. Guruji gave him—'Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'. After repeating the Guru mantra for some time, Ramdas found that though the previous mantra gave him some degree of peace, the Guru mantra proved far more effective and resulted in higher experiences which he had not had before. His mind became still very quickly."

387. A devotee : "What is the secret of success in the repetition of
Surrender, Ramnam?"
the essence
of Ramnam

Papa : "The secret is to surrender yourself to God and take His name. Take the mantra in all humility, feeling that God is within you. Know this—He is making you do all actions as also the repetition of His name. Be conscious that you are doing sadhana as willed by Him. If you repeat the mantra in this manner, the effect will be supremely good. Give up the ego-sense. If you chant the mantra in humility you will find how sweet it is. If not, you don't enjoy the sweetness of the Name and there is no peace gained from it. By humility Ramdas means the absence of the feeling that you on your own are repeating the Name. God is seated in your heart. He has sown the seed within you—the seed of Ramnam. When you thus repeat the mantra you are sure to get such joy that you will wish to do so constantly, without caring for food, sleep, or even for the vision of God. There is unbroken joy in the repetition itself. Your only desire then is to keep the name of God always on your tongue and mind and if at all you pray, it is for this only. Those who have tasted the Name alone can know how sweet it is. It is sweeter than nectar."

388. Devotee : "When we pray to God, what should we ask for?"
The best
prayer Papa : "Ask for nothing of the world. If at all you pray for anything, address God thus : 'Oh God, in my foolishness I may be asking for many things. Be gracious enough not to grant my prayers. Give me only whatever you think is best for me.' This is the best prayer."

389. Devotee : "During sadhana, what form of God were you bringing
Papa found before your mind?"
pure ananda
in Ramnam Papa : "Ramdas was concentrating on the sound of the Name. Ramnam was so sweet that whenever he sang the Name to himself, waves of joy rose in his heart. He never cared for any form then and was fully satisfied with the joy that arose from within on chanting the Name. He was immersed in that joy so much that he forgot even the body. Then the repetition stopped. After remaining in that blissful state for a while, when he came down to body-consciousness, repetition automatically started."

"In those days, whenever he attended bhajans, on hearing one or two songs, he used to get absorbed in a divine rapture and sit for hours, unconscious of the body. But now Ramdas does not go into that state because the joy or bliss he gets is there in all conditions. He sees now that all beings and

things are the embodiments of that divine bliss which he is constantly experiencing. Now every particle of his body is filled with that ecstatic joy; it is controlled now, whereas in early days he could not but dance as he was overcome by that joy. He was then walking very fast, almost running, and if he had to stop, instead of standing quiet, he would be leaping about all the while. Such uncontrollable waves of joy used to thrill and overpower him. It was all due to the power of Ramnam. Where was then the necessity for concentration on any form? Forms come and vanish but you can keep the Name on your tongue always and unceasingly.

"It is like this. First Ramdas took Ramnam and later Ramnam caught him never to leave him till he reached the goal. It burnt away all his desires just like the fire which burns away the wood and at the end both the wood and the fire disappear. So Ramnam having burnt the vasanas, both Ramnam and the vasanas have ceased. Now pure ananda alone remains."

Devotee: "Is there anything beyond that ananda?"

Papa: "There is nothing beyond ananda. That itself is moksha and everything else."

390. Devotee: "Has Swamiji gone to Kumbhamela at Haridwar?"
Pilgrimages
are not
everything
 Papa: "Yes, Ramdas had been there once."

Devotee: "Do we gain by going to such festivals?"

Papa: "Definitely. You get enough knocks, hits and kicks in the crowd. The most crowded period is the brahmamuhurta. That day, a bath in the Brahmakund, it is believed, gives moksha to the bather straightway. Ramdas saw the bodies of hundreds of devotees carried to the burial ground. They were the bodies of those who were crushed in the crowd.

"Experience is the great teacher in life. We know about things only after we experience them. So, you can also go to Kumbhamela and know for yourself what you gain by it. In fact, whatever you want is within yourself. Then what is the fun of going here and there in search of it?

"In the village where Saint Tukaram lived, some persons started on a pilgrimage. They went to Tukaram and requested him to accompany them. Tukaram excused himself, gave them a bitter gourd and asked them to dip it in all the sacred rivers in which they bathed and also take it to all the

temples they visited. Without questioning the purpose, they carried the gourd with them to all the sacred places and also dipped it in all holy rivers. On return from the pilgrimage, they handed back the bitter gourd to Tukaram, who expressed his joy in seeing them all back and wanted to celebrate that occasion with a feast. Besides many other dishes, he got prepared a curry out of the bitter gourd that was brought back after the pilgrimage. When the feast was on, the people tasted the special curry, and all of them declared it was bitter. Then Tukaram asked them: 'How can it be bitter yet? It was bitter before you took it on the pilgrimage. It had a dip in holy rivers and also visited many temples. Is it still bitter? Then it was good I did not go with you. I would only have returned with all my sins.'

"The essential thing is that you should lead an honest, devout and straightforward life, serve your parents, seek satsang and repeat Ramnam constantly. Then you will spiritually evolve. Merely going to places of pilgrimage will not produce the needed change in you."

XXXIX

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, December 14, 1953

391. 5 p.m. Papa got into the car for his usual drive and walk
Improvement accompanied by Mataji, S. and Mama, Mrs. Kamdar's uncle who
in Papa's looked after Ramdas-ashram. Near a lake all got down and went
health for a walk on the bund.

Papa : "Ramdas's health seems to have improved much now. Yesterday he walked for over an hour and did not feel fatigue in the least. You remember, when he was in the ashram, he used to feel so much tired after a walk to the Udyog-shala that he would gasp for breath and like to sit down. Now he feels fresh and light; there is even a spring in his step when he walks. The medicine seems to be acting on him very well."

S : "Friends here, who have seen Papa before, may now be able to notice the difference in Papa's health, but as we see Papa everyday we fail to notice it. We must continue the medicine till diabetes disappears. Afterwards, perhaps, dieting alone will do."

Papa : "This morning Mukund Pai who gave Ramdas by oversight two pills instead of one made such a fuss about it. What was the harm? The later dose can be adjusted. But he wept over it again and again. When Ramdas was taking it, it seems he heard a voice saying, 'You are no good for service'. Then he wept and wept. Later Ramdas had to console him."

S : "As soon as I returned this evening he told me all about it. He said he made a great blunder in giving one pill more this morning and was so sorry, that he wept like a child all the afternoon. I told him that one more pill is never an overdose in this case as it could easily be adjusted later in the day and there was no reason to worry so much about it."

Papa : "However, he made a fuss about it."

Mataji : "This has been working in his mind, so he heard that voice."

Mama : "Papa, as that Bihari is now coming in and sitting with us all, it is better that he changes his dress and becomes clean and presentable. He will not listen to any of us. He will obey Papa alone. Papa may kindly tell him to change his dress and come to the bhajan-hall clean."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas will tell him when he is alone."

December 15, 1953

392. The Bihari was in the bhajan-hall. Papa, when informed of this, **Suffering, a lever to lift up the Soul** went to the bhajan-hall. The Bihari came and prostrated.

Papa : "Ramdas has to tell you something. You must have your hair cut, have a clean shave, put on clean clothes and then come here."

Bihari : "May I do that after the bhajan ?"

Papa : (*patting him on the back*) "Yes, you do that after bhajan."

His face lit up with joy as Papa patted him. Immediately after bhajan, arrangements were made to take him to the barber. He came back at 12 o'clock with close cropped hair, shaven face, white dhoti and chadder.

Papa : "Ah, that is good, it looks as if you have taken rebirth. It is clean outside. Do not create any more trouble here. Be quiet. Do not snatch away the Ramnam books from people who are writing Ramnam."

Papa came in and, referring to the Bihari said, "Now you cannot say he is dirty."

Ghanshyam Sinhji was the younger brother of late Pratap Sinhji of Limbdi. The latter's illness was responsible for taking Papa out of the ashram in 1949 and the subsequent tours. Ghanshyam Sinhji then owned an estate near Bhavnagar and was doing all the work on the farm himself. When he talked about his farm he almost went into ecstasy, and more so when Papa listened to him with interest and attention. For over half an hour they talked about farming, gas plant, crushing machine and so on.

Ghanshyam Sinhji : "Maharajshri, for the wrongs of someone, why should others suffer ?"

Papa : "Nobody suffers for the acts of others. We do not remember all that we have done in this life or the past ones, and blame others for the evils that befall us. Really, we have to blame ourselves. The sufferings are a good lesson to us."

When we know our sufferings are due to our own acts, we make up our mind not to do evil in this life. Since we ourselves are responsible for our sufferings, we must put up with them cheerfully. For spiritual progress, sufferings are necessary.

“Sufferings have not spared even great souls. Sri Rama himself had to go to the forest for fourteen years and you all know what an amount of trouble he had to undergo. Harischandra’s was another instance of suffering. The greatness of these noble souls was revealed when they were put to test. When you take some leaves of an aromatic plant, no smell comes out of them, but crush them, they give out fine fragrance. So too with great men. When they pass through trials and tribulations, their true greatness manifests itself. It will be a great consolation to us if we look at things that way. Let us not, therefore, be afraid of suffering, but face them bravely, come out of them unscathed and purified, and reveal the greatness of the Spirit within.”

Ghanshyam Sinhji : “When is Maharajshri coming to my little farm? Unless Maharajshri comes the crop will be a failure. So please do not fail to come.”

Papa : “Ramdas will visit you some time in January.”

As they had been sitting for nearly an hour, Ghanshyam Sinhji got up along with others, prostrated before Papa, and took his leave. Mataji had by then got up after rest, and they took their leave of her also. When they were almost near the gate, Mataji saw the tin of lozenges in the almirah and said, “Oh, I should have given some prasad to the children.” She took the tin, ran out to the gate and distributed the lozenges to them all.

393. 8-30 p.m. Bhajan was in progress in the shamiana. Mataji and Mataji on her S. were in the room. Mataji suddenly remembering something precognitions said : “About thirtyfive years ago, when I was living in Bombay, a distant relative, who was staying with her husband in Bhavnagar where he was employed, happened to meet me. She could speak Gujarati. When she told me all about Bhavnagar, a desire rose in me to visit Bhavnagar. I suppressed the desire with the counter-thoughts : ‘Why should I have such a desire, what is there in Bhavnagar’ and so on. The desire came thrice and was suppressed every time. But finally there came a voice, ‘You will definitely go to Bhavnagar’. This incident which occurred thirtyfive years ago has been recurring to my mind these three days. You see, what the voice said has come true. When I was a child, I used to feel such desires. Even if I tried I could not suppress them and later found they were fulfilled.

“There are two types of thoughts—thoughts created by ourselves and thoughts that come of their own accord. The latter are the outcome of our vasanas of earlier

births. As a child, the trend of my thoughts was like this : 'I grow up, get married, become a widow. What then ? Take to devotional practice, go to a sadhu and never turn back to family life.' See how exactly they have all happened."

394.

S : "How did you find Anasuyakka when you met her at Khar ?"

**No reason
to weep**

Mataji : "Did you not notice ? It is hard to give up moha for the body. When she came there I was busy preparing Papa's dinner and various other things. After waiting for a long time, she came upstairs when I was about to go down with you for meal. Seeing her coming up, I waited and sat with her for some time. After a few minutes' talk she said : 'You are leaving tomorrow. I don't know when I can see you again.' I was all along chary of talking to her about God. I always talked on the same lines as she did, as it is not at all good to speak about God to those who still have moha for my body. It is because of her moha for my body that she feels so sorry whenever she thinks of me. When she spoke as she did I suddenly broke out, 'I am always with you. I am not going anywhere.' In reply she said : 'When Rama killed Vali and the dead body was lying there, his wife was weeping piteously.' Rama tried to console her, saying : 'Why do you weep ? The atman is never dead. If you weep for the body, it has to go one day or other as that is its nature. In any case you have no reason to weep.' But Vali's wife said : 'O Ram, I am neither weeping for the imperishable atman nor for the perishable body. I am only weeping for that state in which the atman and body are together.' So also, how does it help us when you say you are always with us ?

"I did not say anything. Inwardly I was happy. I only meant to tell her that though living I was as good as dead. Now Anasuyakka herself means that though living, I am as good as dead to them. Afterwards we did not talk much. I wanted to send her by car. So we went out together and came back finding that the car was not immediately available. There was no more talk. Perhaps she was affected by what I told her."

December 18, 1953

395.

**Admonition
to the
recalcitrant
Bihari**

2 p.m. As a number of letters were to be answered Papa was busy dictating. The Bihari in his usual unkempt way came in, prostrated and sat at his feet.

Bihari : "Papa, what shall I do ? Tell me."

Papa : "Ramdas has told you what you are to do. You do not listen to what he says but go on asking what you should do."

Bihari : "I try to obey you. I went to Junagad, but some other power forced me back to you. I cannot stay away from you. I do not know what is pulling me back to you. I have no control over myself."

Papa : "It is only the ego residing within you that makes you dance like this. You want everything done your own way. You have to get away from Ramdas. There is no place for you near him. You will not gain anything thereby. It is found by experience that those who associate always with us do not improve. They start finding fault with us and that becomes the cause of their regression. Even before starting to stay with Ramdas, you have begun to find faults. You asked the other day why Ramdas went to Rajkot and Bombay for attending marriage functions. You considered it a folly on the part of Ramdas and remarked he should not have done so. Is it with this attitude that you are going to stay with Ramdas? Give up that idea and go to Girnar. If you do not go to Girnar now, it is not going to leave you. Girnar will pull you. Believe it; this is true. If you lead an ill-regulated life like this, Ramdas can tell you, you will go off your head."

He could not say anything. Tears were flowing down his cheeks and he looked quite restless. Then slowly he said : "No, Papa, I cannot leave you and go away."

He again prostrated and left the room, weeping. Papa continued dictating letters till 3 o'clock. Some devotees were waiting in the hall to meet Papa.

4-45 p.m. Papa had been thinking of having a walk every evening. After starting on the tour, it was not possible due to too many programmes. Papa managed to get an hour free every evening while at Anantapur, but it was not possible elsewhere. After coming there, the programmes were adjusted in such a way that Papa was free for at least two hours every evening. Sumatilal promised to keep his car ready for Papa to go out at 4-45 p.m. or so to some lonely place and there walk for about half an hour and return. Papa, Mataji, S., Mukund Pai and Goghawala went in the car, got down at the bund of the Gogha tank, and walked on the bund road for some time. They returned to the ashram at 6 p.m.

8 p.m. Papa had his dinner consisting of two boiled vegetables and six ounces of milk. He was sitting in his room and before him were Mrs. Gunavantrai Kamdar, Sumatilal and his wife, Mataji and a few others. Amongst many topics the talk turned to the Bihari.

Mrs. Kamdar : "Papa, the Bihari is roaming about the whole day in the hot sun. He is restless and runs like a mad man. As he is not permitted to come in, he wanders outside."

Mataji : "Looking at his condition, Papa feels sorry for him. He has great love for Papa. If he obeys Papa's instructions, he will soon come up."

Papa : "Really, Ramdas feels sorry for him. True, he has great love for Ramdas and Mataji. But all others are less than straw to him. He does not care for them and falls out with them when they do anything that he does not like. He is not mad. He understands everything. The only thing is that he is bent upon his own way, which is harmful both to himself and others. He is not uneducated. He is a B.A., B.T., and was a teacher in some High School. When he came to us at Anandashram he was all right for the first ten or fifteen days. Later we found that his behaviour was not congenial to ashram life and we asked him to leave. He did so only after giving a good deal of trouble. When we came here, he was at the airport to receive us !"

396. From 8-30 to 9-30 p.m., Papa was talking to a gathering of **Ras-sadhana**— devotees in the hall.

Gopis alone

**know its
secret**

A devotee : "Who knows the secret of Ras-sadhana ?"

Papa : "Gopis."

Devotee : "Can none else know ?"

Papa : "Those who have such bhava as the gopis had, can also know. At the very thought of Sri Krishna, the gopis forgot everything, their household, children and so on, and even their bodies. To attain such prem is no ordinary thing."

Devotee : "I have seen many pictures of Sri Krishna and Sri Rama. In none of the pictures I see them with a beard. When Rama went to the forest, he was old enough to have a beard, and we cannot expect him to have carried a safety razor with him. The artists still paint him only with matted locks and a shaven face."

Papa : "The artists have drawn as they were inspired to draw. Perhaps they were not prompted to present him with a beard. Are you a painter ?"

Devotee : "Yes, I am a painter."

Papa : "Yours is then a pertinent question. If you want, you can paint a picture of Sri Rama with beard and moustache. But one thing you forget. When Rama had the power to do anything he wanted, could he not have stopped the growth of the beard and allowed the hair to grow on his head only ?"

Devotee : "It is possible."

He dropped the idea of painting the picture of Sri Rama with beard.

397. After the evening drive that day when Papa got down from the car, immediately his eyes fell on Chimanlal Ganatra of Dholera.

Another odd devotee

Chimanlal Ganatra was another problem devotee. Two years back he had come to the ashram at Kanhangad. He appeared to be really earnest for a few days. But after a stay of about ten days in the ashram, Papa advised him to go back, take up some work and be of help to his wife and children. Chimanlal told Papa that he was being ill-treated by his wife and children and that it was difficult to stay with them. However, he returned home and news came from his wife that he was simply wasting his time, neither repeating Ramnam nor taking up any work. Papa wrote to him to take up some job. He could not stick to any job and was always a burden to the family.

When Papa had gone to Bhavnagar in March that year for the opening of Ramdas-ashram, Chimanlal came with his wife and children. Mataji gave all possible help to them in cash and kind and they all left for their place. In June that year, Chimanlal again came to Anandashram. Though Papa took him to task for coming there and that too without any previous intimation, he was permitted to stay on for about a month, writing Ramnam everyday. He wrote Ramnam for a couple of days and then gave it up. He was idling his time, smoking a number of bidis and going out without informing Papa. When Papa talked to him once or twice about his acts, his only reply was : "You are prompting me to do everything. You are telling me from without not to do certain things, but at the same time inspiring me from within to do something else."

Papa : "That is the best way of escape. It is no good your remaining here. You people stay here in the name of seva and give us a lot of trouble. You won't obey a word of what we tell you. This cannot go on any longer. It is better you leave the ashram."

Chimanlal : "Papa, where can I go ? I will live here only and serve you."

Papa : "This is the way you are serving. The best way you can serve is to go away from here. Take up some job and lead an honourable life."

It was with great difficulty that he could be persuaded to leave the ashram. He was paid seventyfive rupees for his train fare to his place. In a fortnight he was back in the ashram. When Papa asked him why, he replied, "You prompted me to come back. What else can I do?"

What else could Papa do than keep him there ? He gave him a notebook and pencil and asked him to keep on writing Ramnam. He spent a few days there but did not write Ramnam, continued smoking, and sleeping for long hours in the

afternoons. His eyes did not look normal. Knowing that he was going from bad to worse, Papa kept watch on him. Chimanlal was now, off and on, trying to meet Mataji and follow her wherever she went. Mataji did not like it.

Papa called him one evening and questioned him why he was not normal in his actions. Chimanlal only gazed at Papa with folded hands and open mouth. His gaze was quite abnormal.

Papa : "Why do you wander all the day here and there smoking? You sleep all afternoons. Is it for this that you have come here? Mataji has told you that if you behave like this you will be sent away from here."

Chimanlal : "You are making me do everything. *(Then he sits at Papa's feet and continues)* I am Ram and Mataji is Sita. Let her come with me."

Papa : "Your madness is worse than what Ramdas took it for. Now it is dangerous to keep you here. You seem to have no control over your own actions. You had better pack up your things and clear out immediately."

With much difficulty he was sent away that evening.

When Papa came to Bhavnagar on the 3rd, Chimanlal was waiting for him in the ashram. Papa permitted him to stay for a day and asked him to go away the next day.

That day, even though Papa had seen him, he did not speak to him. When Papa entered the room Chimanlal followed, and prostrated before him. Papa *(with a grave look)* : "Ramdas does not want you to come. Go and wait outside in the hall. Ramdas cannot permit you to stay here. So you had better go away tonight."

With the usual abnormal gaze, open mouth and folded hands, Chimanlal got up and went out. He must have left Bhavnagar the same night as he was not seen afterwards.

9-30 to 10 p.m. As usual, members of Kamdar's family were sitting around Papa. Some were massaging Papa's legs, applying vaseline.

Mrs. Kamdar : "Papa, that Bihari sadhu beat our gateman. He wanted to force himself in and, when prevented by the gateman, gave him some blows and ran away."

Papa laughed awhile on hearing the new development, but made no comment.

XL

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, December 19, 1953

398. 6-30 a.m. Papa was attending to correspondence, immediately
Do manasa after wash and first dose of medicine. It was nearly 7-30 when the
pooja dictation was over. Batukbhai P. Pattani, brother of Anantraï
P. Pattani, used to come every morning for Papa's darshan. That
morning, as it was chill outside, he had wrapped himself up in a black overcoat and
shawl. He came in, placed a flower at Papa's feet, prostrated and sat near him.

Batukbhai : "When you are here, let us at least come and have your darshan
everyday. We are not able to come to Anandashram."

Papa : "Why don't you come? Your brother has come there. You may also
come. You can take your murtis with you and carry on your pooja there. Leave off
all this external worship. Do manasa pooja. Any time, any place would suit it."

Batukbhai : "Manasa pooja is also going on."

Papa : "If manasa pooja is going on, the external worship will stop. You can
do shodasopachara pooja mentally. Manasa pooja gives immense joy. The very
thought of it gives joy. Then what to talk of the joy when you perform it! You will
be immersed in that joy, forgetting the body and the world."

Gunvantraï Kamdar came by air from Bombay at 10-30 a.m. and spent a few
minutes with Papa at the ashram. He again came at 4 p.m., remained with Papa for
about 45 minutes and accompanied him for the evening drive and walk.

399. 6-30 to 7 p.m. was the time fixed for talks. There was a small
Aparigraha, gathering in the hall.
asteya and
brahmacharya A devotee : "What is aparigraha?"

Papa : "The exact English definition of aparigraha is : 'Absence of the sense
of possession.' You may possess things but should not feel that they are yours."

Nothing is yours. Feel that nothing is yours. Say, 'Everything is yours, O my Lord I am only your agent.' This is the right attitude. Sri Aurobindo has said: 'Possess things but do not be possessed by them'."

Devotee: "What is asteya?"

Papa: "Not to desire another's possessions. The very desire to possess another's things amounts to stealing. You may not be physically taking another's things. Mere desire is theft. Instead of envying the prosperity of others, be happy over it. Rejoice over the good fortune of others. Suppose you compete with another and he wins, you must be happy at his victory."

Devotee: "What is brahmacharya?"

Papa: "Brahmacharya is not merely physical abstinence from sex. It is also mental purity. There may be some who have physical control but are unchaste in mind. They cannot be said to be observing brahmacharya. One who is able to gain absolute mastery over sex, physically and mentally, has indeed become divine. He no longer remains in the physical plane. That is why all worship such a one. Absolute brahmacharya is possible only after one is established in one's true Being. This can be achieved only by the constant repetition of God's name. By such repetition abhiman disappears and on the elimination of abhiman all the vasanas are destroyed. Brahmacharya is absolutely essential to spiritual progress. By brahmacharya you preserve the vital energy that is necessary for spiritual progress. When you waste your vital energy you will not have strength for sadhana. Consequently, you will not have the zeal for the repetition of Ramnam."

400. Devotee: "When somebody takes away my property by force, should I also not use forcible methods to get it back? Is it improper?"

Protection of property

Papa: "What methods then would you resort to? Would you go to the law court? If you do not have strong evidence, would you prepare false witnesses and use foul means to win your case? In this connection Ramdas will tell you something about karma. It is understood by all that whatever sufferings you undergo in this life are the result of your own actions in previous lives. When you know this, you do not feel greatly upset over anything that happens to you. Because, if you have to blame anybody, it is only yourself and none else. The loss of your property, though apparently caused by another person, is actually the result of what you have done before, and by this loss you have reaped the fruit of your own karma. On the other hand, if you think somebody else is responsible for your loss and suffering, you get wild and furious with him and take severe action against him. You will thus be creating a new karma for which you will have to suffer later. One who is angry and

wants to inflict pain upon another is the worst sufferer. So, do not retaliate. By going to court you will spend a lot of money and create ill-feeling. All for what—to try a chance of getting back the property !

“There is no harm in your taking action, but it must be done without any trace of ill-feeling in your mind. A friend, who is a big business man, asked Ramdas what he should do with one of his clerks who misappropriated some money from his office. Ramdas told him that he should deal with his clerk as he would with his own son. If his son did the same thing in his office, what would he do ? He would never hand him over to the police. At the most he might say that the son should no longer serve in his office. So also, he might at the most send his clerk away, but not hand him over to the police.”

401. Devotee : “I have been reading your books. Whenever I do so,
Repeat I am so elated that I feel like running to you and surrendering at
Ramnam your feet. What can I do to maintain that exalted state ?”
constantly

Papa : “Having read the books, you must repeat Ramnam.”

Devotee : “It is Ramnam alone that has brought me to you.”

Papa : “Then it is all the more the reason why you should take to constant repetition of Ramnam.”

Devotee : “I came here with the idea of staying with you for some time. But after coming I feel that I should go back. Why is it ?”

Papa : “That is the weakness of the mind. The best thing to do is to go to your place. Instead of thinking of your place while you are here with Ramdas, it is better you go to your place and think of Ramdas. You are disturbed when you have no thought of God. One who has no God-thought is unhappy even if one is in heaven. But he who keeps His name always on his tongue is happy even in hell. Satsang helps you in remembering God always.”

402. Devotee : “I feel sorry for all the evil in the world.”
Hate the Papa : “You feel sorry for it because you do not like the evil
sin, love ways of the world. If you had followed those ways, you would not
the sinner have been sorry at all. Whatever others may do, let us go on the
right path and by our own example we may be able to change those who are pursuing
the wrong path. You should not dislike or hate the wrong-doer. Right is the saying :

'Hate the sin but love the sinner.' We must look at our own defects and at the good points of others. Even in the best of us there are defects and even in the worst of us there are good points."

403. Devotee : "Is not over-accumulation of wealth a sin ?"
Keep money flowing Papa : "Wealth must be flowing like a river. It must never be allowed to accumulate. Accumulation means stagnation. Accumulated water stagnates and stinks, causing disease to people. So also accumulated money brings misery to its owner. Keep money flowing. Wealth is given to you for helping those who are in distress."

404. Devotee : "What is the relation between mind and atman ?"
Mind vs. Atman Papa : "Mind is not atman and atman is not mind. But it can be said that a still and waveless mind means atman. That which is restless and full of desires is the ordinary mind. In the ignorant, the mind sees diversity and is restless. When the vasanas are completely destroyed, the mind as such ceases to exist and atman reveals itself."

Devotee : "A student here is prepared to follow you. Should he leave his samsar ?"

Papa : "By leaving his family and following Ramdas he is not leaving samsar. To be free from samsar is to transcend the mind. When the samsar has left his mind, there is no need for him to go to Ramdas."

December 20, 1953

405. **Auto-biography attempted** Gunvantrai Kamdar had his lunch at the ashram with Mataji. He repeatedly enquired about the adequacy of the arrangements made. He often expressed the desire that Mataji might look to the comforts of the devotees, their food especially, as in Anandashram. Mataji was obviously pleased to hear that.

Immediately after meal he came and sat with Papa who had then got up and was sitting in the room. The moment he sat down, Papa started talking about his childhood days and the varied experiences he had gone through.

Papa : "Last year Ramdas started dictating his autobiography right from his childhood. The idea was to bring out exactly what important events contributed to the great change in his life. After dictating a few pages, left off and did not continue

it. If continued, it would have been very interesting reading as it would describe Ramdas's life as a river flowing through jungles, rocks, stones and sand, sometimes making a lot of noise and sometimes still and silent."

Kamdar : "It must be very interesting and instructive to devotees. Papa can resume the dictation here."

Papa : "Not in this hubbub. Ramdas wants a very quiet place for it. In Anandashram he used to go to S.'s room and dictate for an hour everyday."

S : "As Papa used to do before, if it is now possible to dictate from five in the morning, it will be convenient. But it depends upon Papa. In the early morning if Papa does not feel drowsy, it will be all right. Not otherwise."

Papa : "Mataji may not allow that at all. As we are going to bed late now, she will insist that Ramdas should be in bed till 6 o'clock. So, early morning is out of the question. Let us leave it in the hands of God. He will fix the time and place."

S : "It has been in the hands of God but He has been keeping it pending all along."

Papa : "As the subject has been raised again, He might take it up for consideration."

S : "If Papa finds it inconvenient to dictate, he can make it a point to talk to devotees everyday for an hour about his early life and experience. This will be a more interesting record as Papa will be speaking off-hand instead of dictating after preparation. I shall record your talks and rearrange all bits later."

Kamdar : "It will be better if we go on asking questions of Papa about the early life. Then Papa will speak."

Papa : "From the events that took place in Ramdas's early life, he can feel clearly that there was some purpose underlying everything that happened. These helped in revealing his true nature and also in showing him in a mysterious way what he was seeking, although he was moving in darkness."

406.
**Playing
football
with life**

"Now Ramdas plays with life as people play with football. When you kick the football, you get pain sometimes in your toe and, of course, a lot of fun in the play. So also when Ramdas plays with life he has the joy of it and sometimes the inevitable pain. His mind became a ball of light when it was handed over to Ram to play with. It is not a ball of leather or rubber, but a ball full of divine radiance."

407. **Ramdas is busy doing nothing!** "Ramdas sometimes feels he should put the whole life story in the form of poetry. But Ramdas finds no time, though he does nothing throughout the day. What does he do? He is busy doing nothing! The sun is busy shining and giving light always. Is it doing anything? When it shines people are active. So in the presence of the atman, prakriti is active. Purusha is the all-pervading and eternal witness.

"Once a saint, to test his disciples to see if they were conscious of God's omnipresence, called a few of them, gave them each a mango and asked them to eat the same in a place where nobody could see them. They all went with their mangoes and except one, returned and reported that each of them ate his mango without being seen by anybody. But one disciple came back with the mango and told his guru that he could not find a place where he was not watched by God who is eternal and all-pervading.

408. **Early life** "How Ram has moulded Ramdas's life! When he was last in Bombay his elder brother came to meet Ramdas. He made dandavat pranams to Ramdas. What an astonishing sight! He is fourteen years older than Ramdas. He reveres Ramdas as a guru and does not think of the old relationship at all. He has the highest regard for Ramdas even from the very beginning of his new life. It seems when Ramdas was a child of three years or so, he was lying in a cradle and this brother who was swinging the cradle suddenly saw a bright light in Ramdas's eyes. He mentioned this to Ramdas several years later, See how wonderfully Ram took Ramdas all over India—especially to the four dhams, and many other places of pilgrimage as also for the darshan of saints."

Kamdar : "How did Papa manage to go all over India without knowing the language?"

Papa : "Ram was taking him. Ramdas had absolutely no responsibility for it. He was concerned only with the constant repetition of Ramnam and did everything that helped him to do that. It was only for that purpose that Ram took him away from the house. He could then live in jungles and caves and sit up day and night disturbing none and disturbed by none. Ramdas can clearly see one thing. From the beginning his life has not been a normal one. It was something abnormal. What learning had Sri Ramakrishna? He had the darshan of Kali, and later the highest spiritual experience. Was he lacking in anything?"

It was now nearing three o'clock. Kamdar left for his house.

409. **Mind restless because desire-ridden** 4-30 p.m. When Papa was getting ready to go out for his evening drive and walk, Gunvantrai Kamdar's brother Mukutbhai Kamdar came in with the Rani of Valad along with other ladies. The Rani and all others prostrated at Papa's feet and sat before him.

Rani : "I have all the comforts of life and have no more desires. Still, why is my mind restless?"

Papa : "If you have no desire, the mind will be at peace. The very fact that you have no peace shows that you have desires yet. Outwardly you may say that you have no desires, but they may be lurking deep within."

Rani : "How to get completely rid of the desires?"

Papa : "By taking your mind towards God. Remember Him constantly, repeating His name. You know fully well that your attachment to things of the world will land you only in misery. So take your mind away from these objects that give you misery, and place it at the feet of God. Then alone you can get peace."

Mukutbhai : "Papa, Rani Saheba has fixed up a house for her stay here in Bhavnagar. She would very much like to come and listen to your talks."

Papa : "She can come by all means."

Mukutbhai : "Papa has been detained for some time. It is time to go for the evening drive."

Rani and the others left. Papa also left by car.

During the 'Question and Answer' time at night :

A devotee : "What is mind?"

Papa : "Mind is a bundle of desires. When the mind is freed from vasanas or desires it becomes still ; jiva then realises that he is atman."

410.

A devotee : "Is man free to do what he likes?"

**Is man's
will free ?**

Papa : "In fact there is no freedom for man. Everything happens by the will of God. He who knows this, is free and he who does not know this, is bound. One who feels he does everything, is ignorant and bound, and he who knows that everything happens by the will of God, is liberated. By God's power alone everything happens. Even a dry leaf will not move without His will."

Devotee : "Is it God's will when one commits murder?"

Papa : "If the murderer knows all is God's will, he will not commit the murder."

Devotee : "How to know it ?"

Papa : "By always remembering God you realise that God is the supreme power who guides and controls every action. This realisation is possible only when abhiman leaves you. Otherwise not. Surrender is the way."

411.

Devotee : "Why did God create this drama of samsar ?"

Eternal

play of

Shiva-Shakti.

Papa : "It is not a creation. But it is the nature of God. What is the nature of a child? Its nature is to play. He cannot play alone. So He multiplies Himself into various forms."

Devotee : "Does He get joy in it ?"

Papa : "He Himself is bliss. Whatever He does is bliss. All His forms are only embodiments of bliss. The sun is not shining to give light. Sun is light itself."

Devotee : "Will there be a day when all the atmans will have merged in God ?"

Papa : "All the atmans are God themselves."

Devotee : "What was there before the beginning of the world ?"

Papa : "There is no such thing as the beginning of the world."

Devotee : "Is there not a time when everything is destroyed and the static aspect of God alone remains ?"

Papa : "No. It never happens like that. The static aspect of God always co-exists with the dynamic. There is no Shiva without Shakti. Shakti never perishes."

Devotee : "Does it not happen during mahapralaya ?"

Papa : "No, Shakti is never destroyed. All forms may be withdrawn but the power of Shakti ever remains. There is no pralaya for the one who abides ever in the eternal Being. He sees no difference between kaliyuga and satyayuga. All are satyayugas for him."

412.

**Do sadhana
taught in
the Gita**

Devotee : "Some say, by reading *the Gita*, one gets moksha. Some others say, by doing pooja to *the Gita*, one gets moksha. What is the truth ?"

Papa: "One who reads *the Gita* and lives up to its teaching gets moksha. By mere reading of or doing pooja to *the Gita*, nothing happens. *The Gita* tells you the way to attain liberation. You must walk the path. Suppose you want to go somewhere and on the cross-road you find the sign-post indicating the road to your destination. Will it be enough if you simply garland the post and do pooja to it? Will you reach the place? You have to travel the distance. So you must do sadhana as taught in *the Bhagavad Gita*."

413. 9-30 p.m. Papa was back in his room. Kamdar's family and some other devotees were before him. Everyone was anxious to massage Papa's legs. So they had to do it by turns. Each one got about two or three minutes. They applied a bit of vaseline and rubbed it on Papa's legs. It had become something like a ritual. When it went on Papa was busy cracking jokes and laughing, making all others laugh.

Papa: "When you laugh, the whole world laughs with you. When you cry, you cry alone. So keep on laughing. Never cry. If you cry you will have to do it all alone."

Devotee: "When Ramnam is all-powerful, is it not possible for one to cure one's disease with the help of Ramnam?"

Papa: "Do not use Ramnam for curing diseases. It will be like using brahmastra for killing a bird."

Devotee: "Why should diseases affect that person who always lives and moves in God?"

Papa: "It is the nature of the body to have diseases. One who lives and moves in God does not worry about curing the diseases of his body. He will not use his power, earned by severe austerities for this simple thing. He lives for the good and uplift of others. If he gives all his attention and power to the upkeep of his own body, then he will have no time to do any good to others. Sri Ramakrishna was suffering intense pain caused by his throat cancer. When some devotees requested him to pray to Mother to cure him, he is reported to have said he could not bring his mind down to ask Mother to do something for his body. Saints live to cure the disease of ignorance in others. However much one may take care of the body, it is after all the body, and will drop down one day or other."

414. While massaging Papa's legs, Kamdar noticed a scar on the knee.
**A scar on
Papa's knee** Kamdar: "What is this scar, Papa? Was there any wound here?"

Papa : "Some years ago Ramdas had a fall in the ashram. We used to grow vegetables there and Ramdas would go to the garden to pluck vegetables. One day when he was there he had a fall and his knee was hurt. Lot of blood came out. After a few hours we got the news that war had broken out. Don't know what was the relation between the bleeding of his knee and the war breaking out in Europe. How many years ago was it?"

Kamdar : "It was in September, 1939."

December 22, 1953

415. After breakfast and the day's correspondence, Papa was talking to **Yogakshemam** some devotees, sitting in the room. An old man belonging to a **Vahamyaham** village in Saurashtra came in and introduced himself as having known Papa through his books for over twentyfive years. He had, it seemed, an intense desire to have Papa's darshan all those years, but did not get an opportunity. He prostrated at Papa's feet and sat close to him. He was filled with emotion and his eyes were brimming with tears. Expressing joy at his good fortune to have Papa's darshan, he again prostrated, and asked, "Swamiji, when I repeat Ramnam, I get great joy. Now I know there is no meaning in my staying where I am. How am I to go beyond this stage?"

Papa : "Devotees experience great joy when they repeat Ramnam. Of course, they have to go beyond it. Going beyond means getting established in that joy. This means, of course, going beyond the three gunas. For all these, the Name is your mainstay, coupled with the blessings of saints. How do you get the darshan and blessings of saints? It is possible only by God's grace. When you throw yourself in God's hands, He looks after every bit of your need for your spiritual progress. When you need the darshan of saints, He takes you to them. This is what is meant by yogakshemam vahamyaham."

416. Devotee : "What am I to do now in this connection?"

Cry to the Mother Papa : "Carry on with your bhajan and repetition of Ramnam and pray to God to purify you thoroughly. What else can you do? The child can only cry to the mother and it is up to the mother to do the rest for the child. So cry to the Mother.

"Great saints and jnanis direct us to do this or that sadhana. But Ramdas does not know any such sadhana. His advice is, 'Repeat Ramnam and cry to God to lift you up'."

Devotee : "Even if I do not know the way, will I not be guided?"

Papa: "It is the responsibility of the Mother to take you on the right path. You need not know the path. To feel thus is itself the path."

Tears coursed down the devotee's cheeks. Seeing this, Papa remarked: "A certain saint has said that every drop of tear that is shed by a devotee is an idol of God."

417. The previous evening some devotees had come for Papa's darshan.
Ram, as Among them was a lady named Indu. She had been writing letters
light, is to Papa from Patna inviting Papa there. Indu was sitting in front of
within you. Papa in the midst of other devotees. She came nearer to Papa.

Indu: "Papa, I have come here to take you to Patna."

Papa: "Ramdas cannot go there. He has to stay here till the end of January."

Indu: "Instead of coming here you should have come to Patna and stayed there. There is so much darkness there that your presence is badly needed to show them light."

Papa: "There is no darkness anywhere. It is all light only."

Indu: "But there must be somebody to show that light."

Papa: "Ramdas had gone there long ago and showed them the light."

Indu: "But that was a long time back and they need to be shown again."

Papa: "Time does not matter. Light is light and that is ever bright."

Indu: "Instead of staying here, why not come there?"

Papa: "That is what everybody wants. They want Ramdas to go to their places and nowhere else."

She then requested Papa to initiate her with Ramnam. After the initiation, holding Papa's feet, she asked, "Papa, when can I get Ram?"

Papa: "Ram is within you. Open your heart and there you will find Him. Go on repeating Ramnam. See how much joy you get. If you repeat the Name with all love, you can surely see Ram in your heart."

Indu: "You may see Him in your heart, but I do not see Him in mine."

Papa: "Of course, if you repeat the Name with love, as Ramdas did, you will see Him in your heart."

418. Another devotee : "During your sadhana days were you shunning
Papa muses society ?"
over sadhana
days

Papa: "Ramdas used to keep away from society and remain in caves and jungles in solitude or in satsang, as it helped him much in repeating Ramnam without interruption. He, however, did not hate society. Whenever he saw anybody he took him only as a form of Ram. He prostrated before all. His sadhana then was always to remember the nirgun, niranjan, nirakar aspect of God pervading everywhere, and look upon all as His own forms. So he prostrated before every form. Now he receives namaskars, but in those days he did namaskars. They did not like Ramdas doing so. Whenever he prostrated they would protest and say : 'Why do you prostrate before us ? Do you want to heap sin on us ?' Sin or no sin, Ramdas did not know. He only saw Ram in them and so prostrated. But nobody allows him to prostrate now."

As it was time for bhajan, Papa and others got up and went to the bhajan-hall.

XLI

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, December 22, 1953

419. **Another
recalcitrant
devotee** 7-30 p.m. Papa returned from evening walk and had his cup of milk. As usual in his room many devotees gathered round him ; two of them, sitting on either side, were massaging his legs. It had become the habit of every devotee, whenever he sat near Papa, to massage his legs. Sometimes the massaging became so excessive that it was painful and then he would sit with legs crossed to escape pain. Anantrai Pattani and his wife joined the group.

Mandanbhai, a devotee from Jamnagar who had arrived a few days back, came to take his leave of Papa. He wanted to go back and send his people for Papa's darshan.

Mandanbhai had come to Anandashram a few months ago. His brother, Jodhubhai, was in the ashram, fasting and not heeding what Papa told him. Sick of him, Papa asked him to go away. But he would not and therefore Papa had to send a telegram to his brother at Jamnagar to take him back home. He came and took Jodhubhai away with him.

Papa : "How is Jodhubhai ? Is he studying or doing any work ?"

Mandanbhai : "Jodhubhai has left off his studies. He is doing some work in our fields. He wanted to go over to Anandashram once more and went up to Bombay. But suddenly he made up his mind to return."

Papa : "Why did you allow him to start for the ashram at all ? You know fully well how he behaved when last he was there. He would not listen to us at all ; without taking food properly he would wander outside the ashram the whole day. Ramdas advised him many times to regulate his life, but he never cared. People come to the ashram for sadhana. This is the sort of sadhana they do. They go their own way and do not care to follow our instructions. How can they progress behaving like this ? They get sick physically and mentally, and finally we have to arrange to serve them. You need not send Jodhubhai here. If he comes here he will have mental lapse again. He had had enough of so-called darshan. Let him digest it properly. Too much of it seems to cause him indigestion."

420. **Take to the spiritual quest early** During Papa's visit to Bhavnagar in 1951, he had stayed with Anantrai Pattani, ex-Dewan of Bhavnagar, then seriously ill. After Papa's stay there, he had steadily improved and got well. This time after Papa's arrival, Anantrai was having cold and fever and so for two or three days he could not come to meet Papa. His wife came daily. After Anantrai got well, both of them had been coming together almost everyday. Anantrai sat on a chair near Papa, as he found it difficult to sit on the floor.

Anantrai : "Swamiji, this body is no good for any further work. It has done its work."

Papa : "The race is run. Now it is time to rest."

Anantrai : "When one is young, it is the work of the body, and when one is old, it is the work of the soul."

Papa : "Better to start the work of the soul from youth. Sri Ramakrishna has beautifully put it : 'When we work we must do so with one hand and lay the other at the feet of the Lord. When the work is over we must have both our hands at the feet of the Lord'."

Anantrai : "Ah, that is right, Swamiji."

Looking at the two persons who were massaging Papa's legs, Papa jokingly remarked, "When people go on massaging Ramdas's legs, they sometimes wipe the perspiration off their face and immediately rub the legs with the same hands. Sometimes they put their finger in their nose and mouth and then use the same hand for massaging. Ramdas notices all these, but they are acting involuntarily that they are not conscious of what they do." The way in which Papa explained and acted out their parts raised gales of laughter.

Papa : "This rubbing has been going on too long now. Let the legs have some rest." So saying, Papa kept one foot over the other knee and sat in the posture usual with Sai Baba. The devotee, who was rubbing his feet, prostrated before Papa and said : "I stay in Bombay. I have read your books and heard of you. Only today I have your darshan. I am a devotee of Sai Baba and I am extremely happy to see Sai Baba himself here. It is surprising you took the posture of Sai Baba while I was sitting before you."

Papa : "Ramdas did not voluntarily do it."

The devotee : "Whatever it was, you showed yourself to me as Sai Baba."

421. 10 a.m. A Parsi devotee was sitting near Papa and narrating his spiritual experiences. Near him was standing Indu, the devotee from Patna. When the Parsi was about to leave, he prostrated before Papa who placed his hand on his head.

Parasmani changes only Iron into Gold

Seeing this, after the Parsi had left, Indu sat near Papa's feet and said : "Please place your hand on my head as well, Papa," which he did.

Indu : "Merely placing your hand is not enough. You must change me as Sri Ramakrishna changed Vivekananda."

Papa : "For that you must come here as Vivekananda went to Sri Ramakrishna."

Indu : "Vivekananda did not believe even in the existence of God in those days."

Papa : "Do you believe in the existence of God?"

Indu : "Yes, I do."

Papa : "Then, do not believe in God. Be like Vivekananda and come to Ramdas. You know Parasmani changes iron into gold and not any other metal. If it is rubbed on brass, nothing happens. Iron alone can be so changed."

It was getting late for bath. So Mataji hastened to arrange for the bath and Papa also got up.

422. As soon as Papa came out, Jayantilal, the bearded Ram, who was writing Ramnam outside in the hall, came in with book and pen in hand.

Sannyas for wholetime sadhana

Jayantilal : "Papa, can I have better prayer or meditation if I wear ochre cloth?"

Papa : "Do you mean taking ochre cloth only during prayer and meditation or do you mean sannyas? After putting on ochre clothes you should not engage yourself in worldly activities. You must be in a position to dedicate your entire life to God. If you are confident about it then you can take up sannyas. Are your parents living?"

Jayantilal : "My mother is dead but father is living. From youth I have been engaged in Congress work ; after seeing Papa, I have practically left off Congress work."

Papa : "If you take up sannyas, it must be to devote your whole time to sadhana. Otherwise it is not worth it. Doing sadhana for some time and then thinking of some work is no good. You must have intense dispassion. Then alone you can do sadhana vigorously. Without sadhana, dispassion cools down. So dispassion and sadhana must go together."

Jayantilal did not give a decisive reply, but appeared to be satisfied. He left the room.

423. 'Question and Answer' session.

**Only tamas
and rajas are
obstacles**

A devotee : "It is believed that Indra and other gods place obstacles in the path of earnest aspirants when they are engaged in austerities. Is that true?"

Papa : "It is believed Indra and other gods do not like human beings rising to a state higher than theirs. That is why they put obstacles. But Ramdas's opinion is not any external power that obstructs you but the internal enemy. When you are in either rajas or tamas, you have no inclination for any devotional practice. You cannot then think of God or the path leading to Him. It is when you are in satva guna that you feel like doing bhajan or other spiritual practices.

"Some people ask Ramdas why they are sometimes not inclined to do bhajan or even repeat God's name. The reason is that they are immersed in tamas or rajas. By intense prayer you are raised to satva guna and you are more and more inclined to repeat His name and meditate on Him. Real joy comes to you only then and not while you are in tamas or rajas.

"If you have surrendered yourself to God, He does not permit any obstacle in the way of your sadhana. He will keep you above tamas and rajas. By constant remembrance and surrender to God, try to remain always in satva.

"Vaikuntha and Patala are within us and not anywhere else. He who remains always in satva is in Vaikuntha ; when immersed in tamas he is in Patala ; when in rajas he is on the earth."

A devotee : "How long should I repeat the mantra?"

Papa : "Till you have the vision of God. If your aspiration is intense, you will get God-vision. When your desire is lukewarm, it takes an indefinitely long time to reach Him.

"A devotee aspiring for God-realization desires to remember God constantly. He engages himself in strict discipline and adjusts his life in such a way that he has no chance to forget God. He has a soft heart which melts at the sight of suffering. Hard-hearted people who have no love and sympathy for others, cannot love God either."

Devotee : "Why did God make us hard-hearted?"

Papa : "If you remember God your heart becomes very soft. You yourself made it hard by forgetting Him."

424. A devotee : "Does the observance of sandhyavandan and Gayatri
Sandhya- japa help us towards the goal?"
vandan,
when Papa : "If properly done, it helps. When you do sandhyavandan
effective you must be fully immersed in it. Never do it half-heartedly.

Some people do these as a matter of duty without putting their heart in it. Do not do it that way. Sri Ramakrishna has said that sandhyavandan and other modes of daily worship should end in Gayatri, Gayatri should end in Om, and Om in samadhi. This is the way to do sandhyavandan. If you do it as a matter of duty, it will have very little effect on you.

"But it is said that in kaliyuga, mere repetition of God's name alone will suffice for one's spiritual progress and liberation. Everybody can do this sadhana as it is free from all restrictions of time, place or anything of the kind. This sadhana is prescribed for people of all castes, creeds and nationalities. They can go on with the repetition of the Name even when they are at work. Those who have developed love for the Name will repeat it at all times."

425. A devotee : "What is the form of Hiranyagarbha?"
Can women
repeat Papa : "Ramdas does not know anything but Ramnam. Ramdas
Gayatri ? never learnt sastras or puranas. His only sadhana was Ramnam.
Somebody asked Hanumanji if he knew the sastras. Hanumanji
replied that he knew nothing but Ramnam. So also Ramdas knows only Ramnam."

A woman devotee : "Can women repeat Gayatri ? The sastras do not permit them to do so."

Papa : "That is what the sastras say. In the Kanya Kumari Sthan at Sakori, Ramdas saw the kanyas doing yajnas and many other religious acts chanting all the mantras including Gayatri."

426.
**See God in
everything**

A devotee : "What is real happiness for a human being?"

Papa : "Atmananda or brahmananda."

A devotee : "You say everything happens by the will of God. A person does bad things and does not think of God. Is it not also God's will?"

Papa : "Looking at it through the divine vision you see it as God's will. From the human point of view it is only human will. So also if you see God in everyone, you know that God alone is doing everything. God's will alone works through everyone."

"In this connection Ramdas will tell you a story. There was a king who was very devout. Whenever any sadhu happened to come to his place he worshipped him with all love and devotion and gave him valuable presents. Taking advantage of this a juggler put on ochre robes and posing himself as a sannyasi, came to the king's palace. The king received him with great love and honour and worshipped him in the usual style."

"Seeing the great honour bestowed upon the sadhu, one of the courtiers told the minister that he was a juggler in sannyasi robes and the king was being cheated. The minister wanted to convey this information to the king. He went in and found the king fully immersed in worship of the sannyasi. The minister was wonder-struck at the devotion of the king and did not dare to disturb him. The worship therefore continued undisturbed and the sannyasi left the palace with valuable presents."

"The same evening the impostor-sannyasi was giving a performance in the town. On being informed, the minister decided to acquaint the king with the fact. He took the king out for an evening drive and came to the place where the juggler was entertaining a large crowd of people. Pointing to the juggler, the minister asked the king if he could recognise him. The king immediately ran up to the juggler and fell prostrate at his feet saying : 'O Lord, your lila is wonderful. You gave me darshan this morning in the form of a sannyasi and now in the form of a juggler.'

"That was the vision of the king. He saw God only in all forms. So where is good and bad for him? One who is blessed with this vision sees the same God in the saint as well as in the sinner."

December 25, 1953

427.
**Ram mantra
harmonizes
with other
sounds**

12 noon. Papa was about to retire for afternoon rest. The door was closed. Maganlal Raichura knocked and went in.

Maganlal : "Papa, Maharajshri has come for your darshan."

The day before, Maganlal had informed Papa of the arrival of a professor who had taken to spiritual life and delivered lectures on spiritual subjects. He was then with Maganlal.

Papa (*getting up and sitting on the cot*) : "Yes, let him come in."

A man of about fifty, wearing a white dhoti and a khaddar jacket of red ochre colour, with a small beard and trimmed but uncombed hair entered the room, bowed before Papa and sat in front of him.

Papa : "Very kind of you, Maharaj, to have come here."

Professor : "I have heard so much about you."

Papa : "What is there special in Ramdas ? If there is anything in him, that is in you also and in everybody else. Ramdas is only a child."

It was decided later that the professor should speak at the close of the bhajan that evening. He left the room with Maganlal.

During Papa's usual evening walk he was followed by Mataji, S., Champaben, Kamdar and Mama. While they were walking on the bank of the lake, a car was seen coming towards them. It was taken to be that of the Maharaja of Bhavnagar as only his car was permitted to be driven over the bank of the lake. About a hundred yards ahead the car stopped and the Maharaja, who was driving the car himself, got down and walked towards Papa. In a few minutes they met.

Maharaja (*with folded hands*) : "I have not had your darshan for some time. I knew you are coming here daily for a walk. So I took this opportunity to have your darshan."

Papa : "We had been to your bungalow when we came here yesterday and we were happy to be shown round by the contractor in charge of the repairs. We went into every room, even into the kitchen." (That was a bungalow near the lake).

Maharaja : "I was also told by the contractor and was so happy. I would love to have you at the bungalow for a few days, but unfortunately the repairs are not yet completed. I have a seaside bungalow, a few miles away from here. It is a quiet place. Would you like to spend a few days there with me?"

Papa : "There are regular programmes going on and friends are coming from different places. Ramdas cannot get away from Ramdas-ashram as long as he is here."

Maharaja: "I would at least like to have a bhajan at my place and request you to come there for about two hours."

Papa: "Yes, that will be all right. Ramdas will come to you one of these days."

Maharaja: "Your mantra 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram' is so nice. Whenever in the morning I go for a ride on horseback, the tramping of the horse's hoofs synchronizes with my repetition of the mantra. It is a nice marching tune."

Papa: "While travelling in the train, the sound of the wheels is also in tune with the repetition of the mantra."

Maharaja: "I would have taken you in my boat but unfortunately it is in a hopeless condition. I have not been using it for some years now, and it has not been repaired."

Thus talking, they walked up to the temple, and as Papa was walking slowly, the Maharaja found it difficult to keep pace with Papa. As the Maharaja often went ahead, he had to slow down his pace. The car was waiting for Papa near the temple. Papa got in and the Maharaja, saluting with folded hands, took his leave.

December 27, 1953

428. The day being the thirtyfirst sannyas day of Papa, devotees came in for his darshan and blessings from early morning. It was nearing 7 a.m. when Anantrai Pattani and his wife came in. After prostrating before Papa, Pattani sat on the chair close by. A big pot of ghee and some vegetables brought by them were taken by their servant to be shown to Papa. Since Papa's arrival at the ashram, many devotees had been bringing ghee for Papa's use.

What it means to feed a saint

Papa: "So much of ghee is sent to Ramdas that virtually he can bathe in ghee. They bring these with great love. Why do people bring all things for Ramdas? They take great joy in feeding him. It is said that feeding one saint is equivalent to feeding one thousand people. Ramdas will tell you a story in this connection.

"You must have heard of Eknath Maharaj, the great Maharashtrian saint. He was a householder and had a son who had gone in for some advanced course of study in Sanskrit. Eknath Maharaj was leading a humble life in the village. The villagers used to come to him in large numbers to hear him reading some scriptures in Sanskrit which he explained in Marathi. Thus they were spending some blissful hours everyday, as Eknath Maharaj's exposition was simple and sweet.

"When his son came back, vain of his scholarship in Sanskrit, he did not like his father's exposition in Marathi and so asked him to expound in Sanskrit. His father replied that he would not be able to do so and the people also could not understand that language. But so arrogant was his son, he told his father that from the next day he would do the reading and expound in Sanskrit. As the simple villagers could not understand his exposition, one by one they stopped coming for the satsang and in a few days there was none, and consequently the reading had to be stopped. The villagers became very unhappy at this, as they badly missed those blissful hours. But they could not help it.

"In the meanwhile one poor old woman of the village had taken a vow to feed a thousand people. Though she had taken the vow and had a great desire to fulfil it, she had little means for doing so as she was very poor. She consulted a brahmin who suggested that she might feed Eknath Maharaj and that would be equivalent to her feeding a thousand people.

"When the old woman went to Eknath Maharaj and requested him to grace her house and have bhiksha there, his son protested and asked his father to stop the practice of going out anywhere for bhiksha. However, he permitted her to bring food to his house and serve him. She did so and served the great saint with love and affection. When the meal was over, the old woman, as is the custom, was about to collect the leavings on the leaf as prasad, but the saint's son barred her. The old woman was greatly disappointed. Now the vain young man himself took the leaf on which Eknath Maharaj had taken food, and threw it out at a little distance. When he returned, he found another leaf in the same place. He removed it and to his surprise found yet another leaf, till he had removed a thousand leaves. This great miracle opened the vain scholar's eyes and also satisfied the old mother that feeding Eknath Maharaj was equivalent to feeding a thousand people.

"You must have heard the story of Jesus Christ having fed three thousand people out of seven loaves and three fishes. Can modern minds understand such happenings? They will not believe them."

A devotee: "What must be our feeling when we give charity? Are we not doing disservice helping the poor?"

Papa: "Some people believe that by helping the poor we are really doing them disservice. Ramdas's view is that when we give we should not feel that we are doing so to help them, but for our own uplift and spiritual elevation."

429.
**Realise
static and
dynamic
aspects of
truth**

Anantrai Pattani's younger brother Batukbhai Pattani came in with his wife, as usual, for darshan. He would come with a thick walking-stick, place it near Papa's feet and then touch his feet.

Papa: "This is dandavat—prostration like a stick. Here it is not only like a stick but the stick itself is made to prostrate."
(Batukbhai has a hearty laugh)

A devotee: "What is the effect of Nama smaran?"

Papa: "Take it and see for yourself. If you ask what will happen if you take food, how can Ramdas explain it to you? You must eat food and know for yourself what happens."

Some of the devotees now left the room and some others were called in for breakfast. Papa also got up and went to the bath-room. When he returned, Akbarbhai and his brother Ismailbhai sat near Papa.

Papa: "Unless you harmonize the outer with the inner life there is no peace for you. You may get a certain amount of peace during meditation, but when you come out of it to activity, you get disturbed and lose all that peace you had. Joy in the external activity alone will not be permanent. In the early stages it is very difficult to gain harmony. Harmony can come only when you can conceive the static as the basis of the dynamic aspect. If you think that the static is entirely different from the dynamic, there is clash. Dynamic is the expression of the static. They are two aspects of the same Truth.

"Some people wish to lose themselves in meditation and think that is itself the goal. Some others desire to lose themselves in external work and think that that is the goal. You must first realise the static aspect, and then the dynamic aspect as its expression, which means you must realise That which is both static and dynamic at the same time.

"Scientists and great thinkers may say this is all bunkum because they base their conclusions on the findings of the intellect. They believe only in what the intellect can solve. But intellect has no entry into the spiritual realm."

430. Akbarbhai: "How are we to realise that which is beyond the
Lift the veil intellect?"
yourself

Papa: "You have to remove the veil. You have put on the veil yourself, and you yourself have to remove it."

Akbarbhai : "As you have removed your veil, you can help us."

Papa : "Ramdas is helping you all by showing how you can remove the veil. You have to do it yourself."

Akbarbhai : "But you can help us more than by merely showing the way, as Totapuri helped Sri Ramakrishna to get the experience of nirvikalpa samadhi. Totapuri pressed a glass piece on Sri Ramakrishna's forehead and Sri Ramakrishna immediately went into the superconscious state."

Papa : "Ramdas has not tried that method so far and he may not try at all. But one thing has to be noted. To give that help and experience, Totapuri wanted a Ramakrishna. All could not be given that experience. Totapuri did not press a glass piece on the forehead of others. He did it only on Ramakrishna's forehead."

Akbarbhai : "Why do you not do unto me as Totapuri did for Sri Ramakrishna?"

Papa : "You must then be like Sri Ramakrishna. In fact, Ramdas does not believe in giving any experience which you may have to lose. Though Ramakrishna gave the experience of samadhi to Vivekananda, it was only for a short time and Vivekananda had to do intense sadhana for years in solitude in the Himalayas to obtain that state permanently.

"Instead of having only a glimpse of the divine, you must progress gradually by doing intense sadhana, by purifying yourself and making yourself fit in every way for the highest experience. Unless you are pure enough, you cannot retain the experience."

431. All the devotees had left the room. Batukbhai Pattani alone was
Dedicate sitting near Papa. Seeing S. folding and cutting a few sheets of
everything paper, Papa remarked :
to God

"When you have dedicated all your actions to the divine within you, you do everything with great joy and in perfection. When you offer all actions to God, naturally you will see that you do only good actions. Not only actions, but all your thoughts and words too are to be dedicated to Him. How can you then have bad thoughts, words or deeds? You cannot offer anything bad to God. So you will have pure thoughts, good words and holy actions. Then you become like a sweet flower fit to be offered to God."

December 31, 1953

432. 10-30 a.m. Sai Sattar Shah was in the room with Papa. He was
Saints drop sitting opposite on a chair. He had come two days back and his
body at will health had not been good of late. He was coughing and had pain
 in the chest, and looked very weak. Papa enquiring about his
health, asked him, "How old is your body?"

Sattar Shah : "Sixty-two."

Papa : "You are much younger than Ramdas who is nearly seventy now."

Bansidhar G. Parikh who had come from Ahmedabad the previous day was sitting near Papa. He said, "He looks much older than Papa."

Sattar Shah : "I have not been keeping well on account of some illness or other. That is the nature of the body. Suffering is there for all alike but he who knows the Truth enjoys bliss even in suffering while the ignorant weep and wail."

Papa (to Bansidharbhai) : "How do you find Ramdas's health?"

Bansidharbhai : "Papa looks quite fine. But he seems to have lost a bit of his weight."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas has slightly gone down in weight. He was one hundred and twentynine pounds and now one hundred and twentysix. The doctor in Bombay, who treats him now for diabetes, wishes that Ramdas should bring his weight down to one hundred and twenty. Ramdas feels healthier all the same. This body is quite fit now. There is longevity in the family in which this body was born. Most of the members of the family lived long. Gurudev's father lived up to ninetythree years and Gurudev also lived long. Ramdas's eldest brother Narasing Rao is now eightythree. He came to meet Ramdas at Khar and we had a jolly talk for about an hour."

Bansidharbhai : "So Papa also can keep the body for long."

Papa : "Don't know. They say that Ramdas can drop his body at his own will and you can be sure he is not going to for some time unless he feels that this body has done its work, is diseased and cannot be of any more service."

Bansidharbhai : "Is it not true that all saints leave their body at their will?"

Papa : "It is said so."

Bansidharbhai : "As if Papa does not know."

Papa : "If Ramdas says 'yes', you will all force him to keep his body long. He does not want to commit himself. Anyway he has no wish to drop it early. What is it to drop the body ? After all, it is only like changing the old coat for a new one. The old one will be given up when the new one is ready."

433.

Jayantilal : "Has any devotee of yours realised God ?"

**Permanent
stay with a
saint not
essential**

Papa : "You must ask them. How can Ramdas say ? So many are repeating Ramnam at various places. They do not come and tell Ramdas whether they have realised God or not. Have you yourself been benefited by Ramnam ? Ramdas knows this much that some of them come and tell him they get great joy in repeating Ramnam."

Jayantilal : "If a devotee follows you like a shadow, does he get more benefit than those who stay far away from you ?"

Papa : "They follow Ramdas and give him a lot of trouble. There was a saint in Hubli who, from his own experience, said once that after the calf drinks milk it runs away to play. When hungry it returns to drink milk and again runs away ; whereas the bug always sticks on to the udder and instead of drinking milk, drinks blood. Nobody has benefited by the constant company of a saint. No plant grows well under the shade of a big tree. People think that by living with a saint in an ashram, they will realise God. That is not correct. Ashrams have not produced mahatmas ; wherever a mahatma stays, around him springs up an ashram.

"Though Ramdas visited many institutions during his sadhana period, he never stayed anywhere a long time. Wherever he went, he stayed only a short while, got the benefit of satsang and went away. It was not because he knew that he should not stay long anywhere but he was prompted by God—God seated in his heart. He guided him right. Gurudev had told him that constant repetition of Ramnam would give him eternal peace, and he could depend upon Him for inspiration from within.

"One should rely on the inner guidance. Instead of this, nowadays, people write long letters to their guru asking for instructions on various points. If the reply is delayed, they question why their letters are not answered. But do they follow the instructions that are given ? No, not at all.

"You may ask Ramdas whether a sadhaka should not stay with his guru and progress under his influence just as a wild tree is turned into a sandalwood tree by its proximity to the latter."

Jayantilal : "If not, what is the benefit of satsang ?"

Papa : "You must, of course, have satsang. The question is whether you should stay permanently with a saint or not."

Bansidharbhai : "Papa, all trees in the forest are not turned into sandalwood trees, only a few are."

Papa : "That is it. You have given the answer. There are some trees without stamina. They can never become sandalwood trees."

434. 7-30 p.m. Papa returned from his evening walk and drive, and
Do intense had a meal of vegetables and milk. Akbarbhai and his brother
sadhana Ismailbhai were going by the night train. They came and sat near
Papa before taking their leave.

Akbarbhai : "We had a good feed here and we are going away to play like the calf after drinking milk. We do not want to be bugs."

Papa : "Yes, that is good. Never become bugs. Come back when you want to drink milk. But this may not apply to all. There are some who remain with saints always and never become bugs. That is, of course, very rare. To remain so they must do intense sadhana and retire within themselves in deep meditation. This practice will make them less attached to the physical body of the guru, with the result that they serve the guru properly and not become a nuisance. Even when you remain with a saint, you must do sadhana. That is the important thing. People think by merely staying with a saint, they progress. That is a wrong notion."

435. Bansidharbhai : "When the question was asked this afternoon
Mataji, an whether any devotee of Papa has realised God, why did Papa not
extraordinary mention Mataji's name ?"
case.

Papa : "He either forgot about it or did not want to mention it. She is so close to Ramdas that he never feels she is separate from him."

S : "Mataji's case is different. She was an extraordinary sadhaka and was in a very advanced stage when she came to Papa. She cannot be compared with ordinary devotees."

Papa : "Yes, hers was an extraordinary case."

XLII

Bhavnagar, January 1, 1954

436. Prince Ganshyam Sinhji of Limbdi, who had a farm a few miles from Bhavnagar, had requested Papa to visit his farm and bless him. Papa had seen the place the previous year and spent a couple of hours there. Ganshyam Sinhji's jeep came at 3 p.m. and Papa started at about 3-45 p.m. Mataji, Bansidharbhai and S. followed Papa. Papa and Mataji took the back seat and Bansidharbhai and S. sat in front.

Just before starting, Papa had received a heavy mail including some long letters from Anandashram. As he had little time to read them, he had put them in his pocket. Now he began reading them out to Mataji. For about ten minutes Papa and Mataji were absorbed in reading letters and were unaware of the bumps they suffered, due to the condition of the road and also the jeep not having heavy springs.

When Papa stopped reading letters, Bansidharbhai asked Papa, "How do you feel? The road is bad and you always get bumps in jeeps?"

Papa : "It is nice. Destiny has to be worked out. We could have come in the car from there. Champaben asked again and again if Ramdas would like to have their car. Further, Ramdas himself asked Ganshyam Sinhji's man if we should go in Kamdar's car or he would send his. Let us now face the music."

Bansidharbhai : "This reminds us of our trip to Modasa in a jeep."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas remembers it very well. You were clinging to the jeep lest you should fall."

S : (to Bansidharbhai) : "There is some affinity between you and jeep."

Papa : "And our sitting together in it."

S. turned back to see how Papa was sitting. Looking at him Papa said, "Don't fear. Ramdas is holding on fast."

S : "Papa has not been having massage for the last two months. This jeep journey will shake the body so much that Papa may need massage for some days. During war period people used to say that pregnant women would have miscarriage if they travelled by jeep."

Papa : "Fortunately none of us are pregnant here. That is indeed a redeeming feature."

Peals of laughter kept everyone so engrossed that none marked the passage of time. They got down at the farm at 4-30 and were received by Ganshyam Sinhji, his wife, daughters, Nirmal Kumar's wife and children.

Papa and the others had coffee and fruit. Then all were taken round the farm and shown the fruit trees and vegetable plants. Mataji kept on asking Ganshyam Sinhji various questions about the manuring of plants and other details. They returned to the ashram about 7 p.m.

January 2, 1954

437. 10-30 a.m. After bhajan in the morning, Bansidharbhai was sitting
Three types near Papa, slowly rubbing his feet. Sai Sattar Shah was sitting near
of saints on a chair. Rani Lalitha Devi of Hyderabad, who arrived that
 morning, also sat opposite to Bansidharbhai. Papa enquired of
Lalitha Devi about the devotees in Hyderabad. The talk gradually turned to the days
of Papa's visit to Sakori where also Lalitha Devi had stayed with him.

Lalitha Devi : "The love of the kanyas there for the guru seems to be wonderful. Papa, why did Upasani Baba marry them ? Could he not keep them as disciples only ?"

Papa : "He knew why he did it. But whatever way it was done, see how they are attached to him. They are sure they cannot in any way go astray. He was a very strict disciplinarian. He never allowed them to put on fashionable garments or dress their hair in the modern style. If he found them doing so, he would ask them what they intended to be. 'Dancing girls or what ?' He would be so wild with them that he sometimes used to shout at, beat and kick them. They would run away in fear. Still they loved him."

Bansidharbhai : "Papa, with due respect to him, I might say that this sort of fiery attitude of a saint does not appeal to me. Papa says that the behaviour of saints should conform to the sastras. Is this in accordance with the sastras ?"

Papa : "It is. There are three types of saints. They are all paramahamsas. The three types are bala, unmatta and pishacha. Those who are in bala avastha

always remain like children—playful, gentle and cheerful. Those in the unmatta state do not have anything to do with the world. Those of the pishacha type beat, abuse and/or curse others.”

Bansidharbhai : “Do the puranas speak of any one who was of the pishacha type ?”

Papa : “Yes, there was Durvasa. He was beating and cursing when he got angry. Still thousands of devotees loved him and worshipped him.”

Bansidharbhai : “How could we say they loved him when they ran away from him out of fear ?”

It was time for Papa’s bath. So Papa did not answer the question, but took his leave of them. After bath, he had his lunch in the company of Sai Sattar Shah and was about to rest. Mataji got the hot water bag to foment Papa’s chest, as he had slight pain in the heart region. A few days earlier a bearded, sadhuji aged about sixty, strong and healthy, came to meet Papa. Seeing him, Papa was so full of joy that he rose and gave him a hearty embrace. While embracing, Papa felt intense pain on the chest and so released the hold. On examining, it was found that Papa’s watch which was in his pocket had caused the pain. Since then, fomentation was being given everyday. Papa used to remark : “The sadhuji never wanted the embrace. But, just like calling a running tiger and asking it to eat you up, Ramdas volunteered to give him an embrace and this is the result.”

Bansidharbhai came in and sat near Papa and resumed the conversation.

Bansidharbhai : “Papa, do not people run away from saints of the pishacha type ?”

Papa : “Those who run away, do so whether the saint is angry or not. Are not some people running away from Ramdas ? Of course, Ramdas might sometimes be slightly rough with them for any wrong they do. But they get so furious at it that they go even to the extent of abusing Ramdas and going away from the ashram.”

January 3, 1954

438. 10-30 a.m. Papa had just come into the room after morning
How Papa bhajan. Whenever he came from bhajan he would bring to Mataji
looked upon some prasad distributed to the devotees. That day he had a
Mataji sugarcake in his hand and as soon as he saw Mataji he handed it
 on to her.

Mataji : “It is very good of you to remember to bring prasad for me daily.”

Papa : "How can Ramdas forget you ? You are Ramdas's only support. How can he remain without you ?"

Saying that and laughing, Papa went to the bathroom.

Mukund Pai who was near Papa, looking at Mataji, said, "Now you see what Papa thinks of you." Mataji did not reply and Mukund Pai went out on some work. When Papa came from the bathroom, still laughing, Mataji said : "Papa, when you speak like this, others cannot understand. They take it that you speak having only the body-idea. How can they know with what vision you are talking ?"

Papa only laughed, and went to the hall again to meet some devotees waiting there.

S (to Mataji) : "What did you ask Papa ?"

Mataji : "When Papa said that I was his only support, Mukund Pai looked at me and laughed. He apparently did not understand that when Papa said "you", he meant not this body but divine prakriti. The whole universe is the form of the Mother. How can all understand this ?"

January 4, 1954

439. After midday rest Papa was taking fruits. Meanwhile, the postman came with the day's dak. The chowkidar received it and entered the room. S. who was standing near Papa, thinking that Papa might hurry eating the fruits if he knew that the post had arrived, signalled him to keep the letters on the table behind Papa. Papa saw him leave and asked S., "What did he bring ?"

S : "He brought the post, Papa."

Papa : "Bring it here."

The letters were brought and kept on the table near Papa. Papa glanced over the envelopes and suddenly stopped eating. He took out his dentures, washed his hands and mouth, and was in a hurry to open the post. Noting this, S. instructed the chowkidar to bring in the post, in future, after Papa had taken fruits.

6-30 p.m. Papa returned from evening walk. Some devotees were waiting to meet him. They all came in and sat before him. Just then, Papa's dinner was brought and placed on the table. The devotees went out. Mataji was arranging things on the table. S. was sitting near the door and at his side was Sriram who had come from Bombay a couple of days back. Lalitha Devi was standing near Papa.

As soon as Papa started his meal, a telegram was brought in and handed over to S.

S : "Papa, a telegram"—Papa did not hear him. Mataji came near S. and asked him not to tell Papa before he finished his meal. But now, Papa turned towards S. and noticed the telegram in his hand.

Papa : "What is that ? A telegram ?"

S : "Yes, Papa."

Mataji took it from S. Lalitha Devi suggested that it might be opened after Papa's meal. But Papa said, "It is all right ; Ramdas can read it."

Mataji opened the telegram and placed it before Papa, who read : "Reaching fifth morning Somanath mail—Natverlal."

Mataji : "As soon as the telegram came, my thoughts were of Dayanand."

S : "In Anandashram it is usual to receive telegrams but here it is rare and therefore we entertain some doubt or fear when telegrams are received."

Mataji : "I was anxious to know the contents but, at the same time, did not like it to be opened when Papa was having his meal."

January 5, 1954

440. **Peace in Papa's presence** Rani Lalitha Devi was sitting near Papa along with a few devotees. Papa was waiting for his bath and it was nearing 11 a.m. Seeing Lalitha Devi clinging on to Papa with great love and devotion, he remarked : "What is there in Ramdas ? Has he two horns ? Why do you run after him ? Ramdas was with you in Hyderabad a few days. Then you came to Sakori to stay with him and now again you have come to Bhavnagar all the way from Hyderabad."

Lalitha Devi : "That is what others also ask me. When I was about to go to Sakori, they asked me why I should go to see you as you had been with me at Hyderabad only a few days earlier. They laughed at me when I again started for Bhavnagar. They wonder if I have gone mad. When I am near you, I get so much peace, which I miss when I am away, engrossed in my own affairs."

Natverlal Parikh, who came that morning from Ahmedabad with Chandrakalaben was also sitting among the devotees. They were equally mad after Papa.

Natverlal : "When we left Ahmedabad, our friends laughed at us. They asked us why we should come here as you were with us in Bombay a few days back. When we told them that you would be at Ahmedabad and we would be there also, they laughed still more. They said : "Bansidhar had been to Bhavnagar and returned only recently, and now the younger brother is going. Ramdas who was in the ashram and was not going out at all, is now brought out by these brothers who went to the ashram for that purpose. Finally they would take him to Nadiad and drop him at the mill where he was once employed."

This caused a burst of laughter among those present. Mataji, sitting in one corner, could not control her laughter.

Papa : "So what do you find special in Ramdas ?"

Natverlal : "Papa is a baffling saint."

Papa : "He is not a saint or bhakta. You may call him a baffling person."

441. Lalitha Devi : "What is the difference in the sphere of work of
Saints and saints and avatars."
Avatars

Papa : "They come to the world with different purposes—avatars to destroy the evil-doers but saints to transform them."

Lalitha Devi : "When saints are there to transform them, why should avatars come to destroy them ?"

Papa : "Those whom the avatars killed were destined to be killed by the avatars. Thus, being killed by the avatars, the asuras attained moksha straightway. So it was better that way for the asuras."

Lalitha Devi : "Why don't you make us attain moksha straightway ?"

Papa : "You have to become asuras then. Do you want to ?"

Lalitha Devi : "No, no." *(All laugh)*

Papa : "If we go on talking like this, Ramdas will be late for his bath. He has been thinking of getting up for the last ten minutes but this talk detained him."

XLIII

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 6, 1954

422. Madhuriben had come from Ahmedabad the evening before to
Free yourself participate in the bhajans. She and Lalitha Devi were sitting near
by yourself Papa. Papa had just taken his breakfast.

Lalitha Devi : "Papa, kindly place your hands on my head."

Papa placed his hands on her head saying : "Are you satisfied now?"

Lalitha Devi : "Papa, why don't you make us realise God soon?"

Papa : "What can Ramdas do when you do not want to realise God?"

Lalitha Devi : "We want to."

Papa : "If you want to, you will give up your attachment to things of the world. Ramdas can only tell you what you should do and what you should not. You must do what he says.

"Once a man went and embraced a thorny tree. Thorns pricked him, causing intense pain. Seeing a man passing by, he shouted for help. The man told him, 'Give up your hold and free yourself from the thorns'. But he simply tightened his hold and went on shouting to others, to set him free. Who can help him except himself? So to free yourself is in your own hands and not in the hands of others."

443. Lalitha Devi : "In Sakori they are doing many yajnas. Do these
Benefit of yajnas really help to realise God? Should I also do them?"
yajnas

Papa : "Are you not already doing japa yajna? Ramdas can assure you that by performing japa yajna, one can realise God. About the other yajnas, Ramdas does not know anything as he has not done any of them."

Lalitha Devi : "But they are doing them at Sakori and many other places."

Papa: "They may be doing them. By such yajnas they please various gods like the wind-god, fire-god, and so on and get their blessings mainly for material things. If one aims only at realising God, Ramdas thinks it is enough if one takes to japa yajna. Repetition of God's name has the power to take one to the highest state of realisation."

444. There were some films taken at Anandashram and also of Papa's
Mataji tours. As some devotees wished to see them on the screen, Papa
on the was anxious to get a projector for the purpose and had told Sumatilal
film show Kamdar and some others about it more than once. But none took
 interest in getting the projector. When Papa pressed them further
Mukutbhai Kamdar arranged for one, but before doing so he had a talk with Papa in
which he suggested that the pictures should not be shown to all as there were many
people who criticised the film and did not like it. He said that it might be shown
privately to the family group and a few others after the crowd dispersed. Papa
agreed.

At 9-30 p.m., the projector was brought. Only forty or fifty persons were in the
hall. Papa also was there. But the operator could not start the projector. For about an
hour, he went on adjusting it and it was finally ready. About fifty feet of the film
was shown when the projector again gave trouble. The film was burnt in some
places and the show had to be stopped. When Papa was back in his room, Mataji
remarked: "I was not in favour of showing the picture to a select gathering. If
some people criticise it why should it be shown at all? Showing it to a select few is
worse, because there may be many who desire to see the picture and do not get the
chance. A number of people asked me if there would be a show, but I had to tell
them that the show would be only for a few and not for all, since some people
criticised such films. I could not tell them that the film would not be shown today."

January 7, 1954

445. Punit Maharaj from Ahmedabad was in Bhavnagar with his mandal.
Heed not He was holding his bhajan and pravachan at the Town Hall from
scandal- 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. daily for four days. Papa spent an hour there and
mongers enjoyed the pravachan greatly.

8-30 p.m. It was arranged that Punit Maharaj and party should perform bhajan
at Ramdas-ashram between 8-30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Soon after the start of the bhajan
the Maharaja of Bhavnagar and his family came, paid their respects to Papa and
Punit Maharaj and took their seats on chairs provided for them.

Mataji generally did not attend bhajans. So she was sitting in the room.
Natverlal, Chandrakalaben, Champaben and S. were with her.

Champaben (to S.): "The parcel of films that you required has come."

Mataji: "It is only for being kept inside and not for use here. Let us not have any more pictures taken here. When people do not want them why should we have them? We shall use them where the devotees are anxious to have pictures taken and shown."

Champaben: "Some may not like them. They are not able to take advantage of Papa's presence here."

Mataji: "It is not that they only are unable to take advantage, but you too are not able to give your whole mind to Papa as you pay too much attention to people who talk against Papa. By turning your attention towards them, you are more and more drawn away from Papa. So, what you should do is, instead of caring for what others may say, go your own way. Otherwise you too will fall along with them."

"When the ashram was started at Kasargod, people were pouring in everyday, group after group for bhajans and talks. They were spending hours together with Papa. But when I came to Papa, those people who were so much devoted to him, gradually stayed away and in a short time there used to be none there except Papa, myself and some crows. They had misgivings about our relationship and went on talking against us with the result that their minds got prejudiced. There was a man staying with us in the ashram. One night I found he too had disappeared. Had I paid any attention to those people, I would never have been able to get absorbed in Papa's own Being. I had no time to think of anything other than Papa. As I was alone with Papa, he gave his entire attention to me and this would not have been possible if devotees in large numbers were also coming."

Natverlal: "How did those devotees' behaviour act on your own mind then?"

Mataji: "I never paid any attention to them. Suppose you are hurrying to the railway station to catch the train, will you take note of what people talk on the way even if they are abusing you? So also I was in such a hurry to merge in Papa's Being that I had no time to care what other people said about me. If you want to be benefited by Papa's presence, you should not at all listen to what others say."

January 8, 1954

446. **A loving invitation** Since the first of the month, Papa had been accepting invitations from devotees to visit their houses, and to have bhiksha also in some places. It was almost a daily feature to spend an hour or so in the evenings on visits to one or two houses. So far he had been for bhiksha to the houses of Anantrai Pattani, Veena Devi (wife of Nirmalkumar Sinh)

and P. J. Parikh. Mrs. Parikh's devotion was worthy of note. She was a devotee of Vyasababa of Junagadh. After Vyasababa dropped his body, she had been feeling like a lost child. When she came to Papa, she regained what she had lost. The moment she saw Papa, she would laugh like a child and was never tired of saying, "I have now got my Baba, I have got my Baba, how blessed I am! I lost my Vyasababa years ago; now I have found him in you."

Papa had food in her house that day. As soon as Papa entered her house, she received him with loud laughter and continued laughing all the time. When she performed Papa's pada-pooja, she forgot so many things that she had kept for the purpose, and when she did not find certain things, she only laughed all the louder saying, "In my hurry I forgot." So much immersed was she in the service of Papa that virtually she was swimming in bliss. Enjoying that sight, her husband said, "My wife was so anxious to get things done in time that she got up at midnight and asked me if it was time to get up. She had very little sleep all the night."

After pooja, she fed Papa with overflowing love. One could only watch and enjoy for oneself such expressions of divine love, but could not describe them. Expressing her gratitude she told Papa, "I could not feed my Vyasababa. He would not take food in our house. I had, however, the good fortune of giving him milk. Now I cannot explain how happy I am to feed you. How gracious of you to have condescended to come here!" Papa replied, "How could Ramdas say 'no' to so loving an invitation."

447. 9-30 p.m. Bhajan was going on in the shamiana. Mataji was in the room with Lalitha Devi, Chandrakalaben, Natverlal and S. **Mataji also** the room with Lalitha Devi, Chandrakalaben, Natverlal and S. **subject to** Natverlal narrated to Mataji a dream he had a couple of days back. **dreams** Now S. asked Mataji, "Do you dream nowadays?"

Mataji: "Once in a way I have dreams—of taking food, serving food, and such other things. When in the ashram, I used to dream of the fields, ploughing, manuring and so on."

Lalitha Devi: "Mataji, do you also get dreams?"

Mataji: "Why should I not dream? Have I two horns to be different from you all? Am I not like any one of you?"

Lalitha Devi: "After God-realisation, how can one get dreams?"

Mataji: "No, nothing of the kind. I also dream as any of you do."

448. S: "Suppose you dream of a cobra, will you be afraid of it?
'I am everything' You may not have fear in the waking state."
Mataji: "I am afraid even in the waking state and in the dream state too."

S: "What is it that makes you fear? Generally people are afraid of death. In the case of saints, they have conquered fear, is it not so?"

Mataji: "I do not know all that. I am afraid of so many things."

S: "Is there any difference between the fear you now feel and before liberation? If so, what is the difference?"

Mataji: "There is difference. Before liberation my fear pertained to the body-idea. I was afraid of something that was different from me. Now I and the fear are one; when I am everything, am I not the fear also? I and the fear are one, yet I am different from that. If I say I have no fear, I am not complete. If I have a fearless aspect, I must have an aspect that fears also, and I am beyond both these aspects. So when I say I have fear, it must be understood that I am beyond that also. That is why I say that I and fear are one, yet I am different from it."

Natverlal: "It was nice to hear your talk."

S: "Something to record."

449. Mataji: "It is enough if you record Papa's talks. What is the use
The riddle of recording all these? I am a child after all. I do not know how to talk or lecture. My prayer was that whatever Papa gave me should be only internal and not visible to others. That is why Papa did not give me the ability to write or talk."

Natverlal: "You say you are a child. Papa says he is a child and you, the mother."

S: "That is the riddle. This child is the child of the other child. And the other child is the child of this child."

Mataji: "That is right. But I would say I am my own child. I am the child of my eternal Being. That is why I say I am the child of you all. By saying 'you' I mean Papa's eternal Being, whose form includes all human beings, creatures and everything else."

450. 5 p.m. Papa had just come back from a visit to the house of a devotee. Sanghi, Lalitha Devi, Swami Reddy who came from Hyderabad that evening, a devotee from Dholera, S. and Mataji were in the room. When Mataji was about to go to the kitchen for tea, Papa asked her : "Have you not had your tea yet?"

**How contact
with Papa
helps**

Mataji : "No. He is just preparing it."

Papa : "Ramdas also feels like having some tea."

Mataji went to the kitchen and was about to prepare tea for Papa, when she came to know that cow's milk was not available yet and that only the buffalo's milk brought in the morning was there. Papa was not used to taking buffalo's milk. She wanted S. to tell Papa that cow's milk had not arrived and to ask him whether he could wait until the milk was brought. When S. explained the position to Papa, he replied, "Now is the time he should have tea. Afterwards it is no good. Even morning buffalo's milk is all right." Mataji prepared the tea and herself took it to Papa, saying, "I am not satisfied with this tea." When Papa tasted it, Mataji asked, "How do you like it?"

Papa : "The tea is splendid, simply splendid!"

Mataji : "I thought it was not up to the mark."

Papa : "No, no, it is very good."

Mataji : "I asked Sanghi today how Lalitha Devi had progressed after coming into contact with Papa and taking the prasad." He replied that her anger was less and bhakti more."

Papa laughed and patted Sanghi on the back, saying, "You have become a judge."

Papa : "You are all coming here from different places. How are you drawn here ? Does Ramdas's contact help you ?"

There was no answer from any one. So Papa continued : "If people are turned more towards God, if miserly people become less miserly, if hard-hearted people become less so, there is some benefit from your contact with Ramdas. If people who have vices give them up gradually, if people who have anger gradually become calm, and if selfish people become less selfish, then there is some purpose in Ramdas coming to you."

Lalitha Devi : "Papa talks poetry."

Papa (*laughing*) : "Ramdas is not aware he is talking poetry."

451.

Lalitha Devi : "When can we have the transformation?"

**Requisite
for
transfor-
mation**

Papa : "No use simply talking about it. You must be prepared for it. When Ramdas talks about the trials he had passed through during his sadhana days, people get frightened and say, "If the path is so full of suffering, we do not want it."

S : "Is it really necessary that everybody should pass through this sort of suffering before they realise God?"

Papa (*hesitating*) : "Perhaps it is necessary to some. If you read the life of saints, you will see that everybody had to pass through intense suffering before they reached the goal. Those who had not to pass through sufferings perhaps suffered in previous births."

Now Lalitha Devi's face lit up with a ray of hope. But as if to stifle her hope, Papa added : "Such people are very few."

Lalitha Devi (*with a gasp*) : "Papa, you gave us some hope and you have now dashed it to the ground." (*Papa laughs heartily*)

Papa : "That is why Ramdas asks you all to repeat Ramnam and remain where you are till you get the call which will thoroughly shake you up."

Lalitha Devi : "You must give us the strength to bear all sufferings."

Papa : "That also Ramdas should give, is it so?"

Lalitha Devi : "You must give us the shock first."

Papa : "An ordinary shock won't do. It must be an outright blast."

S : "As Papa said yesterday, it must be an atom bomb explosion. Papa should collect all the devotees together and throw an atom bomb so that all of them will be blasted outright."

Lalitha Devi : "Then there will be a number of sannyasis for Papa and Papa can send them to different places for preaching, as Buddha did."

Papa : "Do you want all of them to be made sannyasis at once? You will become a sannyasini then. Are you prepared?"

Lalitha Devi : "Yes, I am prepared."

Papa : "It must be the final plunge. There should be no coming back from it midway. Can you do so?"

Lalitha Devi : "You must give us the strength not to come back."

Papa : "That shows you are not prepared for it."

S : "Papa should first of all call all the devotees who are prepared, and blast them all together."

Papa : "Ramdas will have to take a different course of action. He must get into each one of you and cause an explosion like a torpedo or like the Japanese aeroplane that got into the ship *Prince of Wales* and exploded it completely."

S : "One evening three years back, when conversing with a few devotees, Papa suddenly asked, 'If there is any one among you prepared to receive the highest spiritual experience, come forward. Ramdas is prepared to give it.' But none came forward. After a few minutes one of them said he was prepared if Papa would give him the strength."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas gave them a challenge. He asked them to come forward, if prepared for the final experience. Bansidharbhai said some time later that Ramdas should give him strength to bear the shock. Ramdas told them plainly that if they were prepared for the shock they would be completely transformed; they would give up attachment to all their possession and relations, and their life would be illumined with spiritual splendour."

Lalitha Devi (to S.) : "Were you not there? Why did you not go forward?"

S : "I was not there at that time. I was in the office then."

Lalitha Devi : "If you were there you would have volunteered."

Papa : "S. has already taken the leap. He has nothing to be attached to. Everybody is not prepared for the final plunge. How can it be forced upon them? To give up attachment to worldly possession is no ordinary thing."

S : "Nambiar came an hour later and was sorry he missed the chance."

Papa : "Ramdas knew he was unfit for it. He had so many desires and vasanas. How could he have the experience?"

Lalitha Devi : "Why not Papa give us that experience now?"

Papa : "Then Ramdas was in that mood. If anybody had come forward then he would have got it. He won't do it now. Ramdas does not believe in a sudden transformation. Even after they get the experience once, they will have to do intense sadhana to get established in it. Vivekananda was given the experience by Sri Ramakrishna, but he had to do sadhana for four years in the Himalayas. He wandered all over India visiting many tirthas. Ramdas also went round India visiting all the tirthas. He did not visit them just for the sake of visiting them but was doing sadhana all the while.

452. "The purpose of sadhana is to purify ourselves and put down our ego. Wandering from place to place helps. Because while wandering one has to beg for food. When people come to Ramdas saying that they are fit to renounce everything and ask Ramdas's permission, what Ramdas asks them is whether they are prepared to beg their food. Once a young man came to the ashram and wanted Ramdas to give him self-realisation. Ramdas asked him to have his head clean-shaven, put ochre clothes on and beg for his bhiksha in the village near-by. The man disappeared. It seems Samarth Ramdas asked his disciples to beg in the streets for bhiksha in order to crush their ego. To Nambiar also Ramdas had said the same thing. To crush his ego strict and disciplined sadhana was necessary. Ramdas suggested he should go to Rishikesh and live on bhiksha. But he was not prepared to do it. It is not only that one should beg for food in Rishikesh and other places where one has no friends or relations, but one should also beg at one's own place where one was holding some position and was respected by people.

"Another young man came to Ramdas. He was full of vairagya. The moment he met Ramdas he was transformed. He sat near Ramdas, took the mantra and tears were rolling down his cheeks. Immediately after he got the mantra, he went away, had his head shaved, put on ochre cloth and went first to his own house to beg for food. Seeing him, his brothers were surprised and called him in, but he replied that he had no business to go in as he no longer belonged to them, but only to God. To beg for food at one's place is not easy. People may taunt you and make fun of you. You must be able to take it coolly. Honour and dishonour must be same to you. Can you do it? Then only you are fit for the final plunge.

453. "After realisation one becomes an instrument for selfless service. Offerings He inspires thousands and thousands to lead a better life. He has to a saint, nothing to gain, nothing to lose. Whatever he gets, he distributes right attitude to others who are in need. Suppose a man gives him one thousand rupees for feeding the poor. The saint undertakes the work and does it selflessly. That is why it is said that householders should do charity through saints. When a saint receives money from a householder and distributes it to others,

he does it only on behalf of the householder and the householder gains the saint's blessings also. The blessings are very powerful. This type of charity reduces the chance for abhiman. Of course there are some people who say with pride, 'I have done this and I have done that for this saint or that saint,' as if they had done a great favour to the saint. Anybody giving anything to a saint, should do so for his own spiritual progress and not for obliging the saint. There are of course some who always feel that whatever they do is for their own spiritual progress. Charity done through saints will have a hundredfold effect.

"After all, what do saints want? They are satisfied with a piece of cloth and a morsel of food. That they can get from any devotee. Though all-powerful, they show themselves to be in need and sometimes even demand money from devotees, thereby giving them a chance to serve. When such a chance comes and the devotee gives money to a saint knowing that he is serving the saint for his own good, he is really benefited by such service. On the other hand, if he gives something to the saint, thinking he is thus helping him, he does not regard him as a saint but as a beggar. When people feel that a saint is in want, it means that they have not understood him, but have taken him to be an ordinary man going about for food."

454. Dholera devotee : "In a house, if the husband is spiritually inclined and the wife is not, should he give her up and go away or is he bound to remain at home?"

When husband or wife not spiritually inclined Papa : "In such cases, the man must gradually transform his wife. There are so many cases like that. Sometimes the wife is devout and the husband is not. In some other cases the husband is devout and the wife is not. Recently a mother came here to Ramdas and explained to him how her husband is against her devotional practices. It seems he throws away the scriptures she is reading and asks her to stop chanting God's name. Ramdas advised her not to worry but carry on with her devotional practices silently. She can carry on her household duties and repeat God's name mentally. In course of time her husband is sure to be transformed. She should love her husband and not quarrel with him.

455. "There are some men who do some devotional practices like taking early bath, having ash or chandan mark on the forehead, reading scriptures and so on, but spend the rest of the day cheating, quarrelling, abusing and so forth. They find fault with their wives for not being devout. The wives have then every right to ask, 'Is this your devotion to God? If you are a devotee of God, should you not control your tongue and adjust your life in such a way that you remain calm and peaceful, causing the least pain to others'?"

"It is, first of all, our duty to analyse and find out what faults we have. We are not to find fault with others. But our habit is to make a mountain of a molehill in respect of others' faults and *vice versa* in respect of our own. By doing so we are only multiplying our own faults. On the other hand, by finding only the good in others we will be reducing our own faults. Even the worst of men have some virtues in them. We must see only the good in others and be aware of our own faults. A good man finds only good everywhere and an evil man finds only evil. When Yudhishtira was asked to find out an evil man he failed to find one, while Duryodhana could find no good man anywhere when he was asked to find one. We find our own good or evil reflected in others. So what we should do is to turn the torch on ourselves instead of on others. When we do so, we become aware of all our defects. When we see good in others we see only God there. That helps us to find God within ourselves. It is a double process. By trying to find God within, we will be able to see only the good, that is God in all, and by trying to see God in all, we will find God within ourselves.

"What is the use of simply putting on the garb of a devotee and leading an evil life? There are many people who never talk about God, but lead a simple, straightforward and honest life which is in many ways better than that of those who make much of their own devotion. It is said that there is hope of salvation for a virtuous infidel but not for a vicious believer.

"Ramdas has been talking for nearly an hour, has he not?"

Mataji : "More than an hour, Papa."

456. Lalitha Devi, who all along was listening with great attention, got
Aftermath up to stretch her limbs and said, "I have been sitting for an hour
of the talk motionless and my legs are numb."

Papa was talking rather very seriously. There was no smile on his face. He was very grave. Sanghi who was sitting a few yards away, after the talk was over, remarked, "From fine poetry it suddenly turned dry prose, very dry prose. I cannot digest all these. It was too much for me. My head is already heavy."

Papa, hearing that, could not control his laughter. In fact, when Papa was talking, the atmosphere was so tense that everybody became serious and consequently nobody intruded into the talk.

Sanghi : "Papa's talk was like hammering on the head. Just after tea, it went on and on."

Papa : "Was it after all so hard and was it the effect of the tea?"

Sanghi : "Yes, Papa. Just after the nice poem and tea, what followed was very, very dry prose."

Papa (to S.) : "You have to oil Ramdas's head tomorrow. It is rather hot now." (*laughing*)

S : "So the hammerer and the hammered both have become hot !"

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas was not hammering on a soft surface. It was like hammering on steel."

S : "That shows what our heads are."

January 13, 1954

457. A devotee had come from Hyderabad the previous evening. He
Speak only told Papa that he had taken leave on the false ground that his mother
truth was under eye-treatment and needed his help. Papa told him that
 it was not good on his part to have resorted to a lie, as he could
have told the truth, and if leave was not granted, he should have taken it as God's
will.

Papa then asked him : "Is your mind not pricking you now for having told a lie ?"

Devotee : "Yes, Papa."

Papa : "So the joy of your coming and being here is gone. When Ramdas went to Badrinath, it was found very difficult to enter the temple and have darshan. One poojari in the temple told Ramdas that those who were sick were permitted to have darshan first and that Ramdas could avail himself of that opportunity if he said that he was sick. Ramdas replied that he would even go without darshan but was not prepared to tell a lie."

January 14, 1954

458. 10-30 p.m. Papa was lying on his cot. His legs and back were
Ramdas for being massaged. Lalitha Devi was near him, holding the hot-water
discipline bag for fomentation of the chest.

Lalitha Devi : "When Papa came to Hyderabad the year before last, I had a doubt in my mind. I knew that when people went to see maharajas and please them, they used to ask for lands or other valuable presents. But I could not decide what I should ask of Papa. In the course of a conversation, Mataji told me that I should ask Papa for no worldly thing but only pray to him that I should merge in his eternal Being. So whenever I prostrated before Papa my prayer was only that."

Papa (to Mataji) : "Oh you told her what she was to do !"

Mataji : "I don't remember."

Papa : "Anyway it is your language."

Lalitha Devi : "Later I told this to other friends. Then they were asking me why I did not tell them earlier. So, Papa, my prayer is that you must have me merged in your eternal Being."

Papa : "As Mataji has told you this, you must ask her how she herself became fit. She put herself entirely into the hands of Ramdas, not caring for the future. She gave up everything and clung to Ramdas. The world taunted her, criticised her and gave her no end of trouble. She did not care. Besides all the troubles she had from the world, Ramdas also gave her enough trouble asking her to go and serve in several houses. Ramdas was very strict and hard on her. You must be prepared for that, are you ?"

Lalitha Devi : "No, I do not think I am as yet prepared for it. I shall then merge in Mataji's swarup. You and Mataji are one after all."

Mataji : "Nothing of the kind. You must ask only Papa."

Papa : "So you want to be Mataji's disciple. Is it so ? She will feed you well and ask you to sleep till 6 lest you should get headache if you get up at 4. She will give you all other comforts. And that will be the end of it. What sadhana can you do ? It was so arranged that she came to Ramdas only after his sadhana was over. Now she makes him sleep till 6-30. Even then she hesitates to wake him up. If he gets up at 5-45, she says, 'Sleep, sleep, sleep ; it is not yet time. What are you going to do getting up now ?' If she had come to Ramdas earlier, his sadhana would have all gone. If Ramdas tells anybody to be strict in diet and sleep, she takes Ramdas to task. She wants them to eat to the full and lead an easy life. As for Ramdas, he is a strict disciplinarian. He would make them beg their food."

Lalitha Devi : "Papa, I shall come to the ashram, stay there and beg from Mataji."

Papa : "Ah, that you will do ! Without absolute renunciation nothing can be attained. Mataji's is an example of renunciation. But she does not like others to pass through that."

S : "Two years ago, Mataji proposed that Papa should help the devotees to realise God, living in their own homes, carrying on their usual work and not externally renouncing anything. Does Papa remember ?"

Papa : "Yes, but that is impossible. At one stage they have to give up, and they will give up everything. Finding that family life is such a great obstacle to their progress they will kick it off and be free of it."

Mataji : "Should they wander about like these sadhus you see now ?"

Papa : "Ramdas does not mean that. Let them give up everything and come to Ramdas. He will then see to their further progress."

Lalitha Devi : "Papa, I don't know anything. As you make me, so I will become."

Saying that she prostrated at Papa's and Mataji's feet. It was nearing 11-30 p.m. Papa went to bed.

January 15, 1954

459, 5 p.m. Papa was having a stroll in the ashram hall. With him were
What is a few devotees including Lalitha Devi.
renunciation ?

How it comes Papa : "Renunciation does not come by planning or calculation.
about It must come of itself through a divine call. The call will be so
irresistible that you will not be able to reject it."

Lalitha Devi : "How does the call come ? Is it by Nama smaran or guru kripa?"

Papa : "It does not come by mere repetition of Ramnam. Ramnam helps, no doubt, but guru kripa must be there."

Lalitha Devi : "Is it by Papa's own effort or by guru kripa that Papa got it ? Is it after leaving the house or before ? Is it after initiation or before ?"

Papa : "It was before leaving the house and before initiation. It might have been by the grace of a saint whom Ramdas does not remember."

Lalitha Devi : "What does renunciation mean ?"

Papa : "When Ramdas left his house, his daughter, only daughter, was unmarried and he did not leave any property behind him. After some time his wife came to him and asked how the daughter was to be married, as he had not made any provision for the same. Later, he happened to witness her marriage which was arranged very nicely. He did not take any part in it. He only witnessed it as a play. He was playing with the children in the pandal. This is a concrete example of how God takes care of everybody. Our so-called dependents are not really depending on us. We all depend on God ; we feel that they are depending on us because of maya. Through ignorance we cling to them and they cling to us for support and security.

"The ego-sense cannot be got rid of easily. We have to pay the full price in order to realise God. We give up the perishable and get, in return, the imperishable. We get the eternal in exchange for the non-eternal. Even if we offer millions of lives to realise God or Immortality, that price is nothing compared to what we achieve.

"When Mataji came to the ashram, she came with only one cloth, at 10 o'clock in the night, and said, 'I have come.' Ramdas replied, 'You have come to your own house'. For three years there was no communication between her and her relatives. After three years she received a letter that her elder son was seriously ill. Ramdas asked her if she would go to see the child. She said that by going there she would not be able to give him life. She also felt that as the boy was by birth weak, if he died he would have a better body in his next life and there was no need to be anxious about his health. She had left her children under the care of loving people and they would nurse the boy properly. Hence she felt her presence was not needed there. Ramdas then asked her what he should reply. She said that Ramdas could reply as he pleased. Ramdas then proposed that some prasada be sent and it was done. The boy recovered, no doubt, but the news reached her only after four or five years. This is the meaning of renunciation."

Lalitha Devi : "Is it necessary to leave the house and stay in an ashram?"

Papa : "It is not necessary. One can practise while in the household. The ashram is but a bigger house. The difference is that the standard of the ashram is universal. If one can live a detached life in the house it will be like the ashram. When we feel that we are doing proper sadhana, we must keep in mind the great saints like Narada, Prahlada and others. By doing so constantly, our ego-sense disappears."

Lalitha Devi : "How is it that all sannyasins do not realise even after external renunciation?"

Papa : "In comparison with the householders and others, the sannyasins have gained a certain amount of peace as they have no sense of possession, dependence, or even position. So, even the external renunciation helps. But internal renunciation is absolutely necessary."

January 16, 1954

460. 4 p.m. Papa was in the room talking with a group of devotees.
Strange Message came from the kitchen inviting all of them for tea. Papa
happenings then asked them to go. Papa and S. were alone in the room after
 they had left. In a few seconds a young man who was sitting near
Papa so long and had just gone with the others for tea, suddenly returned to Papa

as he was waiting for a suitable occasion to meet Papa alone. He said, "Papaji, I have to tell you something."

Papa : "Yes. Speak on."

Young man : "I had a dream about fifteen days back. In that my father and myself were sitting at your feet and when we were about to leave you, you told my father, "Dedicate your son to Ramdas, will you ?" I was anxious to tell you about it earlier but I was away in Bombay and came back only yesterday."

Papa : "Ah, that is good. Did you tell your father about it ? What did he say ?"

Young man : "I told him. He also suggested that I should tell you about it."

The young man's eyes were filled with tears. Papa patted him on the back and gazed at him for a few seconds. He placed his head at Papa's feet, his eyes overflowing with tears.

Young man : "Still I am not able to concentrate on Ramnam."

Papa : "What are you doing ?"

Young man : "I am a dealer in firewood."

Papa : "Are you a bachelor ?"

Young man : "No, I am married and have a child three days old."

Papa : "Carry on with your usual work and mentally take it for granted that you belong to Ramdas."

When the young man heard this, his joy knew no bounds. He again fell at Papa's feet, who once more patted him on the back. When he got up and left, wiping his eyes with his handkerchief, Papa said to S., "Strange things have started happening."

S : "Did they start only now ? Have they not been happening for many years ?"

Papa : "Yes, they have been, but more frequently now."

XLIV

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 20, 1954

461. Invited to lunch, Papa, Sri Sai Sattar Shah, Mataji, Appibai and
Lunch with S. went to the palace, where with folded hands the Maharaja
the Maharaja received Papa saying: "Please come in. I am highly honoured by
your gracious visit." He took Papa to the spacious hall and seated
him on a sofa and the others on chairs nearby. The Maharani, the Yuvaraja, his
brother and a few others also came and paid their respects to Papa. To the chanting
of vedic mantras by priests, the Maharaja performed pooja to Papa and garlanded him.
The Maharani garlanded Mataji. The Maharaja then sat near Papa.

Maharaja: "I returned from Junagadh only this morning. It is very gracious
of you to have come to us today. All the people of Bhavnagar are blessed that you
have chosen to stay in the city a few months every year."

Papa: "It is the love of people that brings here many mahatmas. Recently
you had the company of Bindu Maharaj and Punit Maharaj. This mahatma (*pointing
to Sai Sattar Shah*) comes here very often. The ashram that has been built here is a
token of the esteem of the people of Bhavnagar for saints."

Maharaja: "All the subjects of this state are very devout. The presence of
saints like you helps to maintain their devotion. So kindly visit us here occasionally."

Papa: "There is another reason why the subjects are so devout. They have
had successive maharajas who are great souls. From what the people talk of you,
Ramdas can well understand the love and regard they have for you."

Maharaja: "It is all the grace of gurus. Without their grace what can we do?"

Papa: "Of course, Guru's grace is everything."

Maharaja: "How long are you staying here?"

462. Papa : "We are here till the 28th. We then go to Ahmedabad and Bombay. From Bombay we proceed to Nagpur, Calcutta and Katrasgarh. We return to Bombay, spend a month there and propose to go to Matheran during the summer months, as Ramdas's body is not able to stand the heat. It had withstood intense cold and intense heat when Ramdas was moving about from place to place in different parts of India. He was then wearing only one piece of cloth. But even with all these comforts now, he is not able to stand the summer heat. In those days he had great *tapo-bala* (strength of austerities). Now, having attained the goal, no tapas is necessary for him. He led a strictly disciplined life in those days. Now he has no such discipline. He puts on fine dress and lives comfortably."

Maharaja : "They were all your sadhana days. Now you have reached the goal. What more discipline do you need now?"

Papa : "The other day Mrs. Pattani was asked by somebody why Ramdas is living like a maharaja, putting on rich garments. She replied, 'Swamiji does not require any such thing ; it is for us that he is having all these comforts. We give him everything and we want him to have this and that. What does he want for himself?'"

Maharaja : "The person who asked this question must be having a wrong vision. He sees only the superficial things. He does not realise that you have gone through severe austerities and that having reached the goal, need no further sadhana. Now you live only for us. We have to take advantage of your presence."

Papa : "There is nothing strange in their remarking so. All cannot understand the nature of saints. While moving about in the Himalayas, Ramdas happened to be in the Nilkant Hills and he wanted to lose himself in the jungles there. But Ram commanded him, 'You have done enough of wandering in the jungles and you have attained what you wanted. Now you have to live in the world and spread the glory of My Name. You may go about from place to place rendering service to ME'. So Ramdas gave up the idea of staying on in the Himalayas and came down to do His bidding."

Maharaja : "When you were in the mountains you said Ram commanded you. How did He talk to you?"

Papa : "He commanded Ramdas, talking from within. His talk from within was as clear as the talk of yourself and others. Before that he had wandered all over India visiting the four dhams and many other holy places."

Maharaja : "You must have met many mahatmas also during your wanderings."

Papa : "Yes, he had darshan of many saints, and he was living, moving and going about in the company of sadhus. They took care of him and were very kind. When it was intensely cold and Ramdas had only a piece of cloth, they spread a blanket for him and made him sleep on it. Ramdas was like a child in their company."

In the course of the lunch the Maharaja was talking to Papa.

Maharaja : "When you are sitting, eating, walking and doing other things, Ramnam repetition must be going on within you. Is it not so?"

Papa : "Repetition might be going on. Ramdas is not conscious of it. But the purpose of the repetition has been served. Ramdas has become Ram Himself. There is no more need for repetition. Now he lives and moves in the ocean of bliss all the time."

Maharaja : "The young folk are more drawn towards siddhis and miracles nowadays."

Papa : "To run after siddhis is not good."

463. Maharaja : "I understand that you yourself worked a miracle
A miraculous cure recently. This boy Raghuvir's father, Ajit Singh, told me that he had a very bad type of ringworm on his body, neck and head, and with your blessings it was cured overnight. You blessed him while you were at Dhrangadhra and afterwards he had a dream one night. The next morning when he got up and looked into the mirror he found that the ringworm had disappeared. He wrote to his wife to this effect but she could not believe it ; for it was a longstanding trouble and he had tried many medicines with little effect. So he had again to write to her that he was completely free from that trouble."

Papa : "Ramdas did not know anything about it. When Ajit Singh took Ramdas to Dhrangadhra he told him about the ringworm and wanted Ramdas to pass his hand over his neck and head and bless him so that he might be cured. Ramdas did so but never heard anything about it later. He wanted to ask Raghuvir about it, but every time he came there Ramdas forgot to ask him."

Maharaja : "I would request you to bless my son also so that he may develop bhakti."

Papa : "Ramdas blesses him."

Maharaja : "Maharani is anxious that he should get married soon, and get a good bride. Please bless him."

Papa : "Yes. Her wish will be fulfilled."

Yuvaraja : "First I need blessings for passing my examination."

Papa : "Which examination ?"

Yuvaraja : "B.A., final, next March."

Papa : "Oh, that is very near. You will pass."

Maharaja : "Before he passes any other examination, you yourself have to pass him."

Papa : "Oh yes, Ramdas passes him. He is coming for the bhajans there often. Raghuvir and some other young men also come with him. It is good these young men have a taste for bhajan and satsang. These are the two important things required, which they have. So their spiritual progress is assured. Generally such young men, especially college students, have no taste for bhajan. But these youngsters are different. They are on the right path."

Maharaja : "I am very happy today because you have blessed that he will pass his B.A. examination. I have five lakhs children in the State. Please bless them all."

The Yuvaraja then took Papa to his room and played for about half an hour Madhuriben's tape-recorded songs at the same time getting autographs from Papa. Papa then got up to leave. The Maharaja again requested him to bless all his five children and also the five lakhs in the State. His children prostrated before Papa.

Maharaja : "When you come next time you may be pleased to stay a few days in my house and also for a few days in the seaside house. I would have taken you to my house near the tank this time but unfortunately it is not ready. You may be pleased to stay there during your next visit."

Papa : "Ramdas will do so."

Papa then walked almost up to the portico. The Maharaja with folded hands expressed his joy and gratitude with a broad smile. Papa got into the car and reached the ashram at 12-45 afternoon.

In a few minutes Papa was resting. Remembering the visit to the palace, Papa said : "How childlike the Maharaja is ! He was very happy to have Ramdas there. He talks without abhiman."

S : "Last time his son performed Papa's pooja and now he himself did it."

Papa : "So during the one year, Ramdas has risen in their estimation. Is it not so ? Ramdas is going to be a popular figure !"

S : "Going to be ? As if you are not !" *(Papa laughs)*

Papa : "And miracles do happen even these days."

S : "We could not believe when reading in books about various miracles. Now we hear about them firsthand. I shall get further details from Raghuvir about the miraculous cure of his father's ringworm trouble."

464. 5-30 p.m. Papa had returned from visits to the houses of two devotees and was with Mataji and some others. Mataji was writing
Saints Ramnam. S. was sitting in front of Papa. Ramprasad Dave, with
promote his wife Shantaben from Ahmedabad, had come in the morning. They
happiness of were also there, gently rubbing Papa's legs. Papa started talking to
others Ramprasad Dave how Ramnam should be kept continuously on the
tongue, and about other topics.

Then a man of about forty years, with a black coat and thick spectacles came in and enquired of Papa about Akbarbhai and Ismailbhai. When he was told that they had not yet arrived, he took his seat quietly with the other devotees a few feet away from Papa, and listened to Papa's talks. After a few minutes he came near Papa and asked, "Swamiji, what is the use of simply preaching all these which make people idle ? In the name of devotion they neglect their work. Should they not be industrious ?"

Papa : "People are very industrious in the West. With what result ? It has produced bombs—atom bombs for destruction. So if you go on merely working and working, instead of creating harmony and peace, you will become an instrument for war and destruction. This is the example shown by the West and we are trying to imitate them. Westerners are not able to sit for a few minutes quietly without doing anything. Their only business is work and work, either to loot or exploit somebody. This is the spirit that has seized Western and other countries. But thousands of people from those countries are coming to India in quest of peace because they have no peace there. So do you think mere industrious life would do ?"

Young man : "Vinoba Bhave leads a very simple life and works hard."
(hinting perhaps that Papa is simply talking and doing no work)

Papa : "Saints are working for the happiness of others, for the uplift of others. But we expect them to work as we want them to do. We do not know the value of their work. Do you think people are idling away their time chanting Ramnam ? In

fact, they are chanting the Name and at the same time working also. Chanting Ramnam, they create a power to quell destructive forces, thereby contributing towards peace and harmony. There will be less exploitation then.

"If you come to our Ashram you will see what activities are going on there. All are engaged in writing and repeating Ramnam. We are running an industrial school where many young boys are given free vocational training. We have a dispensary where hundreds of patients are given free treatment. We hold lands and cultivate paddy. We have a goshala. So everybody is busy with Ramnam and work.

"What are you doing? What have you sacrificed for others? Those who talk much do very little and those who do much, talk very little. Ramdas started talking about this because of your question. Everybody knows what he has to do. We are mere talkers. Before trying to find out what others are doing and not doing, we have to find out for ourselves what we have done.

"By repeating God's name people give up laziness, become more alert, energetic and self-sacrificing and thereby useful to all; miserly people become liberal; selfish people become broad-minded and help others by sacrificing their lives. There may be cases where the effect of Ramnam on them may be slow, but we cannot expect results suddenly. Ramnam in all cases must bring inner peace. If you have mental peace you will be able to act as a human being, otherwise you act as an animal."

The young man could not put any more questions; he quietly went back and occupied his seat.

465. **Close your intellect and open your heart** Ramprasad Dave, whose hearing was bad, was taking part in the above conversation, though he could hear only bits here and there. As the young man went back to his seat, Dave started: "I know by intellect that all these are perishable things and I have to leave them behind one day or other. Still when something happens I forget all about it."

Papa: "Mere knowing is not sufficient. It is a question of feeling. You must close your intellect and open your heart. Then you can be kind, compassionate and loving to others."

Shantaben now put in a word: "Papa, he talks about love and compassion, but refuses to give alms to the poor people who beg for it. He asks them to get away."

Dave (*trying to defend himself*): "By our giving alms we encourage beggary. I am prepared to give them food, but they don't want it. They want to carry things home."

Mataji: "They may have their children to be looked after. How can they eat alone?"

Papa: "If you allow your intellect to play its part here, it will deceive you. You must allow your heart to have full play. You will see that the heart is always for giving. You expect God to be loving and compassionate to you but you do not want to be loving and compassionate to others. Suppose you go and ask somebody for some help and you are refused. How would you feel then? You must put yourself in their position and see. Nobody's position is permanent. The king today becomes a pauper tomorrow. Ramdas was begging from door to door and in some places he was asked to get away. How would you like it? You want others to help you when you are in difficulty but when others come to you for help you refuse. You get angry when somebody insults you but you insult others."

466. **Turn the searchlight inward** Papa continued: "Can you not try to forgive others for what they do? If you forgive them, you will receive forgiveness from God. Otherwise not. Peace does not come to us as we do not realise how we are cursing and abusing others without forgiving them. What you should do is to forgive others and turn the torch on yourself and rectify whatever defects you have. If you do that you get peace for yourself and you will also be able to transform others as you will be a centre that radiates peace. See for yourself whether you are a paragon of virtue or an embodiment of iniquity. How can one get happiness if one covers up one's defects and points out others'? Let us examine ourselves and know our assets and liabilities. We will of course find more liabilities than assets."

"Spiritual life is a normal life, and life without knowledge is abnormal. The state of ignorance is a disease. When you are cured of the disease of ignorance, you realise what you really are and then the life that you lead is normal. You must free yourself from this illness and become normal. Some people think that to lead a spiritual life is abnormal!"

January 22, 1954

467. **Have a world vision** 5 p.m. When Papa was about to return to the ashram after visiting the house of a devotee, Mataji asked Papa: "Shall we go and see Anantrai Pattani? It seems he has a cold and is not able to come to the ashram to see you. We can be back in an hour."

Papa (*after a moment's thought*): "Yes, we shall go. He was coming to the ashram in the cold wind. That must have affected him."

In ten minutes they were at Anantwadi. As the car stopped at the portico, Papa and Mataji noticed Anantrai standing in his vegetable garden nearby. They got down and walked up to the garden. He greeted Papa with great joy: "I am very glad you have come to my garden. You must go round. I cannot walk, so I have sent word to my wife; she will be coming in a few minutes to take you round."

Papa: "It does not matter. You should not walk. Your man is here. He can show us round."

One of his servants walked ahead and Papa followed. Papa had his walking-stick in hand but was still unsteady as the ground was uneven and there were bunds every five or ten yards. After looking at the various vegetable plants grown there, Papa reached the wheat field, and, standing there for a minute, had a view of the large green field in front extending over a furlong. From there he took a turn to see the swimming pool close by. To reach it, one had to climb six or seven steps made of smooth white stones. When Papa was about to climb the steps, Mataji called out: "Papa, please take care and climb slowly."

Papa: "Ramdas is ever careful. Don't you think he is? For your sake he wants to keep this body long and allows it to be taken proper care of. He is also trying to keep himself fit. He volunteers for the treatment of his diabetes."

Mataji: "Yes, Papa, you should do so."

Papa: "Do you think he is going away soon, leaving you all?"

Mataji: "No, Papa, you should not, for our sake."

Papa saw the swimming pool and the well from which water is pumped. When Papa was standing near the well, Mrs. Pattani came and joined the party.

Papa: "Ah, you have come! Do you use this water for drinking?"

Mrs. Pattani: "Yes, we take it for drinking purpose."

She then took him to another side of the garden through the narrow track leading from the well. Anantrai had by that time been called to his bungalow and was attending a meeting. Mrs. Pattani ordered some chairs to be brought to the garden. Papa and others sat down. In a few minutes a servant brought some pooja materials. Mrs. Pattani began to perform pada-pooja sitting on the sodden earth and Papa's feet placed on a plate. She then washed his feet and did pooja. Mataji asked her why she was doing pooja then.

Mrs. Pattani : "I wanted to come to the ashram in the morning for doing pooja. But somehow I could not. You know the health of my late brother's son is not good. I want to send him this tirtha so that he may take daily a small quantity."

When Papa got up and was nearing the car, Anantrai came out and called Papa in. Papa followed him.

Anantrai : "We are having a meeting. The leading educationists of Bhavnagar are here. Won't you please come in so that they may also have your darshan?"

As soon as Papa entered the room, four persons who were there got up and greeted Papa with folded hands. Papa was seated on a sofa and Anantrai introduced his friends to him.

Anantrai : "We are having a conference, our annual affair, and we have to send a report to Delhi. We are here discussing the world problems when we cannot solve our own problems."

Papa laughed and encouraged them : "That is what is happening. But so doing, it is clear you have at least a world vision. There are many people who have a very narrow vision and just look after their own families only. Well, permit Ramdas to take leave of you now."

Anantrai : "Yes. It is late for you."

Papa reached the ashram before 6 p.m.

468. **Truth not in books but in the heart** Krishnadas Dalela of Gwalior was at the ashram to receive Papa. He had long been trying to have Papa's darshan, but due to ill-health and financial difficulties, could not. Even before the car stopped, Papa saw Krishnadas waiting there, and told Mataji, "That is Krishnadas." Krishnadas rushed forward saying, "Krishnadas", and as soon as Papa got down, he fell prostrate at his feet and then at Mataji's.

Papa : "How are you ? Are you well now ?"

Krishnadas : "I am still unwell, but if I do not meet you here, where and when can I have your darshan ? I felt, even if I die it does not matter, but I should have your darshan now."

Krishnadas was an old devotee of Papa. He was an expert in singing *the Ramayana*. He was going about from village to village in various parts of India doing bhajans and kirtans. Lately he had been unwell, being laid up with typhoid and chronic dysentery. He had translated *the Bhagavad Gita* into Marathi, Hindi,

Bengali, Oriya, Urdu, Nepali, Persian and English. He brought the complete manuscript and showed a few pages to Papa. He then chanted a sloka of *the Gita* and its translation in those languages.

One devotee : "It is a wonderful work. How many years did you take to complete this?"

Krishnadas : "It was done in the course of many years."

Papa : "He has been at it from the very beginning and he is a natural linguist."

One devotee : "Who composed all these? You?"

Krishnadas (*pointing to Papa*) : "It is all his."

Papa : "Ramdas is being accused of everything done and not done!"

Krishnadas laughed, and pointing to the heap of books, said : "Papa, this is, after all, a heap of ignorance."

Papa burst into laughter and said : "He says the right thing. After all, Truth is not in these things. Truth is in our own hearts."

Krishnadas : "What words can describe Truth?"

Papa : "Now, take all these books and keep them in your box. If you put them here they will be spread everywhere here. So take them away."

Krishnadas : "Papa, I shall take them away but please touch these books so that I can keep them as your prasad."

Papa touched the books.

469. 6-30 p.m. Question and answer time. Papa took his seat and **Foreign tour**, for a few minutes all were quiet.
no plans

One devotee (*breaking the silence*) : "If Papa is going to the West, what mantra will Papa give them, as they belong to a different faith?"

Papa : "Ramdas does not make any plan now about it. Whatever Ram prompts him he will do. There is no need to think of it now itself and Ramdas has not thought of it. There are, of course, so many people calling him there. Even today there is a letter to say that they are expecting Ramdas in America. When Ram

takes him, Ramdas will go. Even if He does not take him, still it is all right. When He takes Ramdas, He will show what Ramdas should do and should not do there."

There was perfect silence for a long while.

470. Papa : "You have no more doubts. You seem to have no question **Be busy with** to ask, as you are all sitting quiet."
sadhana

One devotee : "We have heard everything from you. Now our business is to do sadhana."

Papa : "What you have to do now is sadhana. If you are hungry, and somebody tells you that you should go to the bazaar, get provisions, cook food and eat, what will you do ? You will go to the bazaar and so on. You cannot satisfy your hunger by simply sitting and talking about provisions and food. So also you have now heard enough. You must do what you are told to do and be busy with your sadhana."

471. A devotee : "You described to us the darshan you had of Lord Krishna. But you never told us about Ram's darshan."
The mantra represents
Saguna,
Nirguna and
Shakti
Papa : "Ram gave darshan to Ramdas in the form of Krishna. He can come in any form. In the Mantra 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram', Om stands for Nirguna Brahman, Sri for Jaganmata or Shakti, and Ram for Saguna Brahman. So in this you have Saguna, Nirguna and Shakti all together. It can be said that Ram stands for Purushottama—Nirguna and Saguna at the same time. Saguna means that which has name and form, and that is the prakriti. Om is Nirguna and both together is Ram, the Purushottama. Victory to Him ! Victory to Him ? Where ? In your own heart. What will happen then ? He will reveal Himself in your heart and then all your desires, vasanas and abhiman will disappear. So go on singing : 'Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'."

472. A devotee : "When did you have your sakshatkar ?"
About
sakshatkar
Papa : "One cannot exactly say when and where he had sakshatkar. Because it is not a thing that happens in a second. There are various stages and types of sakshatkar—Saguna sakshatkar, nirguna sakshatkar and the experience of the Purushottama who is beyond Saguna and Nirguna. He who has got the vision of Ram as all beings, creatures and things (as Saguna), and as static Brahman (as Nirguna) and also as beyond both, is a mahatma rarely found."

"To have darshan of Krishna Bhagwan in a particular form is itself not everything, because that form does disappear. So you must pray for the vision that lasts forever and by which you see God everywhere. Wherever you look there is Ram. Then you have darshan of Ram always. For one who has realised the Purushottama, there is absolutely no misery of any kind. How is it possible? Because all the desires of the mind are gone. Now every particle of his being is filled with bliss and he radiates rays of bliss. To attain this blessed state nobody strives. Why? Because God's command has not come in their case. Nothing is possible without God's grace. With His grace alone can a person think of God. When He chooses to reveal Himself in his heart, all his desires and vasanas disappear and he has the vision of God everywhere. He who has this vision is God himself. It is not that he is God and others are not. For him every form is the form of God. Some one asked Swami Rama Tirtha, 'Who are you?' His reply was, 'I am God, and so are you'."

473. **Shanti and ananda, the same** One devotee : "Is it possible that one gets peace (shanti) and does not get ananda (bliss)?"

Papa : "Shanti and ananda are one and the same. There is no shanti without ananda and no ananda without shanti. When your mind is still you get shanti or peace. From the state of peace arise waves of joy. That is ananda. Peace is like the deep and still ocean and ananda is the wave that rises on it. The deep sea is water and waves are also water. So shanti and ananda are not different. Ananda is only a manifestation of shanti.

"With Shiva, the nirguna Brahman, as the foundation, shakti (prakriti) is dancing. Shakti is responsible for creation, preservation and destruction in the manifestation. Shakti is the expression of Shiva Himself. Those who have realised all the aspects of the divine see the whole universe as waves of bliss rising out of the deep ocean of peace.

"In the Atlantic Ocean there are icebergs floating. However big they may be and however different they may appear to be from one another, they are only solid forms of water. As you see only water in the ice, you will see only the nirakara, niranjana Atman in all the names and forms."

In the course of these talks an old mother in the audience became tired of the questions being asked. With folded hands she said : "What is the use of asking all these questions about God? God is sitting in front of us (*pointing to Papa*). That is enough for me ; what more do you all want?"

474. In the evening Papa had been to the Yeshwant Satsang Mandal where, in the Yeshwant Mahadev's temple compound, there was bhajan for about an hour. It was attended by a large number of people. From there Hiralal Pandya and Jivanlal Bhatt took Papa to the Sant Ashram. Papa spent a few minutes there and returned to Ramdas-ashram before 6-30 p.m.

6-30 p.m. Question and answer time. All the devotees were sitting silent looking at Papa. After some time, Papa himself started talking.

Papa : "Ramdas is prompted to talk to you something about Kundalini Yoga. Kundalini is a hidden power that rests in the muladhar which is at the base of the vertebra. It is like a serpent having three and a half coils. In the state of ignorance this serpent is asleep with its head downward. As long as it sleeps, the person is immersed in worldly pleasures, has no taste for God's name, has no aspiration to realise God, and even dislikes satsang. If by any chance he comes into contact with a saint, the latter's power and grace work in him and he thenceforth aspires for a spiritual life and eternal happiness. He renounces the transitory pleasures of the senses. Now kundalini awakes and seeks to rise up.

"Kundalini is awakened by various methods. Raja yogis and hatha yogis do it by yogic practices. Also by nama japa, kundalini is awakened and it rises. Ramdas shall tell you the external signs of a person when his kundalini is at the various centres. The one above the muladhar is swadhisthana. When the kundalini rises to this centre, there is seen in a person a keen desire to court satsang and to visit holy places. When it goes to the next higher centre, manipura, passion for the enjoyment of sense-desires is lessened. As soon as it reaches the heart centre, anahata, devotion to God is awakened. Dispassion becomes firm, and day and night there is only one desire in him and that is to realise God. With it grows love, compassion, kindness and peace in his heart. Now the cruel become kind and loving, the miserly become generous and the angry become sober.

"The next centre is vishudha. As soon as the kundalini reaches this chakra, the devotee talks of God and only God. He does not find interest in talking about anything else. He talks only of God to all he meets. The next centre is ajna. Now the devotee gets the vision of God in the form he meditates upon— as an image or as light like the moon or the sun. This is a very critical stage for the devotee. To go beyond this centre is very difficult. This is the spot where the three subtle nerves (ida, pingala and sushumna) join together and form a knot. Guru-kripa is necessary to break this knot and raise the kundalini higher to reach the thousand-petalled

centre called sahasrara. Before the devotee rises beyond the ajna centre, he gets only saguna darshan. He gets jnana when the kundalini reaches sahasrara. The three nadis or nerves mentioned above are so subtle that no physician can ever find them, and they are called psychic nerves. After the attainment of jnana alone one gets mukti or liberation. Only now do all the vasanas completely disappear.

“Before reaching sahasrara one remains in suddha satva, but as soon as the kundalini reaches this culminating point, the devotee experiences nirvikalpa samadhi in which the body is completely forgotten and becomes inert as an image of stone. It is here that the devotee realises his identity with the Paramatman and now a complete transformation takes place in his life. Then starts the process of gradual divinisation of the body ending in the vision of God everywhere.”

475. Papa continued : “Jnanis stop with the experience of nirvikalpa
Purna Yoga samadhi and they consider the body and all the universe as illusion
won by or non-existent. Even after the experience of nirvikalpa samadhi,
bhakti though the mind is free from vasanas, the body is not. Of course,
 jnanis do not care about it as the body and everything connected
 with it is unreal. But the yogis are not satisfied with this realisation. They make
 the body also pure and illumined. That is Purna Yoga. Then every particle of his
 body is radiant with spiritual splendour. Now the yogi has attained perfection of the
 body also, the grandest spiritual experience.

“This attainment is possible for one who walks the path of bhakti. In Raja yoga they watch and mark the progress of the rising of the kundalini from centre to centre by these external indications. The bhakta’s case is different. From the very beginning he attunes himself to God. He does not worry whether he is pure or impure, but he clings on to God. He also never cares whether the kundalini has risen or not. By his intense devotion the kundalini, instead of rising stage by stage, shoots up and reaches the sahasrara.

“That is why it is said that bhakti is the easiest path. All other paths need a settled and regulated course of discipline, but in bhakti no such discipline is necessary. Love is a natural trait in us all from our very childhood. As children we love our parents ; as we grow, we love our brothers, friends, relations, husband or wife and so on. Instead of having these perishable things as objects of love, we have only to look upon God, the imperishable, as the sole object of our aspiration and love. Instead of loving the perishable which brings us sorrow, we must love the imperishable which brings us eternal peace. This path is therefore easy. You have heard the sloka, the meaning of which is :

‘Thou art my mother, my father Thou art ;
 Thou art my relation, my friend Thou art ;
 Thou art my learning, my wealth Thou art ;
 Thou art my all, O my God of gods I’ ”

476. The usual evening bhajan was over at 8-30 and a few devotees
Interest in were talking to Papa in his room on the third floor. Bansidhar
astrology Parikh, Natverlal Parikh, Narottam Shah and some others were in the
 gathering, talking about various matters. At 9-30 the crowd dispersed
and Papa was about to go to bed when Bansidharbhai, Natverbhai and his wife came
back to sit with Papa as their car had been sent by Mataji on some errand. Papa said :
"All right. You can sit here. But Ramdas will be lying down. Of course he is not
going to sleep so soon. When his body is being massaged, we can go on talking.
Now there is a packet here (*taking it in hand*). It smells fine. It may contain some
sweets. (*Opening the packet*) Ah ! fine pedas ! Ramdas will give you one each."

He distributed the pedas, washed his hand and lay down on the bed. The
lights were switched off. There was a dim light coming from the other room. On
one side of the cot sat Bansidharbhai, Natverlal and Narottam Shah. All were quiet
for some time. Papa suddenly remembered what he had been talking in connection
with Sri Aurobindo's book and his remark about astrology.

Papa : "Ramdas cannot but laugh when he remembers Sri Aurobindo's remark
about the Bhṛigu Samhita as the 'Old Dodge'. Ramdas had some interest in
astrology. When he was at home in his thirties he used to read the horoscopes of
his parents and their thirteen children—10 boys and 3 girls. From the horoscopes he
would gather some points and compare them with their life and character. Ramdas
can tell you that such a study gave him faith in astrology. In one case he found,
according to the horoscope of one of his brothers, that the person had something
in him which nobody could have understood or known from his external life. Ramdas
came to know of this from the horoscope and he wanted to make sure of it, but there
was no way of doing so except by asking him direct about it. Ramdas boldly asked
him if he had such a secret as that. He was wonder-struck and asked how Ramdas
came to know it."

S : "Did Papa's own horoscope reveal anything great in those days ?"

Papa : "Ramdas did not pay much attention to his own horoscope. He was
more after reading the characters of others from their horoscopes."

477. Bansidharbhai : "Now Papa can read the hearts of all people.
The elusive Does astrology give him any help now ?"
Ramdas

Papa (*laughing*) : "Who said that Ramdas can read the hearts of all people ?
Ramdas never said that. You can't catch him, because he is so elusive." (*Peals of*
laughter)

Bansidharbhai: "You can read the minds of people when they come and prostrate before you. By knowing exactly who they are and where they stand, are you not helping them?"

Papa: "No, Ramdas does not do that. If he goes on reading the minds of each and everybody who comes near him, he will be simply moving about superficially in the mental and physical planes. But he now directly pierces through to the source and sees only the divine in everybody. Living and moving in that consciousness, he cannot see good or bad anywhere. Good and evil are, after all, relative terms. So Ramdas does not care to read the minds of those who come near him.

478. **Ramdas could gauge progress made by devotees** "But, one thing Ramdas clearly sees. He can understand immediately if a person has progressed or not. If he sees him now, and again after a month, Ramdas can clearly see what progress he has made. But Ramdas does not talk about this to that person or anybody else, as by doing so he will be only retarding the progress of that person. If he is told that he is progressing on the divine path, he is likely to get puffed up and thereby stagnate; if he is told that he is not progressing, he is likely to get dejected. So it is not advisable for Ramdas to tell if somebody is progressing or not. Ramdas can say this: "All those who are attached to him beyond everything else are progressing on the path.

"You may all say that you make no progress. That is quite natural, as a devotee never admits his progress until he has the fullest vision of God. Till then you struggle and persevere and declare, 'I have no real love for God. If I had, I would have had his darshan.' You feel you cannot remember God constantly and strive hard to do so; you will not admit even if you have progressed. This is born out of humility."

479. **Awareness through practice** Continuing, Papa said: "You must develop witness-consciousness. Stand apart from the movements of the mind and watch it. If you do so the mind will become still in no time. To develop this witness-consciousness, constant repetition of Ramnam is of great help. Witness-consciousness cannot come all of a sudden. Long and continued practice of Ramnam is absolutely essential. To sit even for a short time, entirely detached from all objects, and to remain merged in your own Self, will give you ecstatic joy and you will thereafter be able to maintain this consciousness even when you are engaged in various activities. You can always remain conscious of the eternal, all-pervading, changeless Truth behind all movements and changes in the manifestation. Then you are always joyful. In the beginning you will find that you lose this witness-consciousness when you are engaged in any

activity. By constant practice alone you can be established in it. This is what J. Krishnamurti calls 'awareness'. Constant remembrance of the divine will gradually develop into that consciousness in which you can live and move. If you have listened to Ramdas, you must have understood what he said. Try to assimilate it and put it into practice."

Bansidharbhai: "That man who brought those pedas today is really a good man. Out of the pedas all this talk came."

Papa: "As soon as Ramdas took the packet and opened it, he found it to be so nice-smelling. Therefore he distributed them to all. If they are not distributed, what is the use of having such nice pedas at all?"

S: "From consciousness we have suddenly come to pedas."

Papa (*laughing*): "Pedas are the solidified form of that consciousness. When the whole world is the form of that consciousness, why not pedas?"

The car had returned. Bansidharbhai and Natverbhai got up to go home. While prostrating before Papa, Bansidharbhai said: "Papa, you talked about witness-consciousness. Now you must give us that consciousness."

Papa touched his head saying: "Now go home. It is getting late for you. We ended the talks nicely with sweet pedas. It was a sweet end."

XLV

Anandashram to Bombay, December 31, 1955

480. **Vedanta sammelan** Papa, Mataji, S. and D.M. Pathak (the masseur) left Anandashram early in the morning and reached Mangalore at 10 by train. The party went to Lakshmibagh, the residence of Srimati Lakshmi Devi Shama Rao. Shama Rao was an ardent devotee of Papa and had been in touch with him for many years. It seemed he was very anxious to attend the Silver Jubilee Celebration of Mataji's renunciation held in the ashram on 29 November, but could not do so owing to ill-health. He had requested Papa through his wife that Papa should stay as usual at their house for some time on his way to Bombay on 31 December. Papa had agreed. But Shama Rao passed away on 23 December. His wife desired that Papa should not for that reason change his programme of coming to their house.

So Papa and party spent a few hours at Lakshmibagh and had their lunch. In spite of the fact it was a period of mourning, many devotees had gathered there and all felt blessed by Papa's presence. The party left for the aerodrome at 1 p.m. and reached Bombay at 6-45 p.m. and drove to 'Shreyas', the residence of Natverlal G. Parikh.

'Shreyas', Bombay, January 1, 1956

6-30 a.m. Natverlal, who was sitting near Papa remarked : "This is New Year' Day."

Papa : "What special significance has the New Year' Day ? When we are living in eternity we have no count of time !"

Many devotees came to have Papa's darshan and they stayed on till 11 o'clock. In the afternoon, Harkishanlal and Maganlal Dresswala came with some printed invitations. They handed over one to Papa. It was about the Vedanta Sammelan to be held in Bombay under the presidentship of Sri Prempuri Maharaj, in the last week of January. They both requested Papa to make it convenient to attend the sammelan, if only for a day ; he might come to Bombay for that purpose by plane from Bhavnagar and return the next day.

Papa, with folded hands, told the friends that he was not prompted by Ram to comply with their request to attend the sammelan and might be excused. He added : "Ramdas is not a big swami to attend conferences and address meetings. He is only a humble child of God. What right has Ramdas to sit in the company of great swamis? Ramdas is not a swami. Somehow the word 'swami' is prefixed to his name. If he is to be a swami he should have ochre clothes. Ramdas does not wear ochre clothes. Sannyasins, by virtue of their being sannyasins, and also of their great learning, have a right to preside over or conduct such conferences. But Ramdas's case is different. Moreover he is not inspired by Ram to attend the sammelan."

Harkishanlal : "Are we not also prompted by Ram to invite you for the sammelan? We are sure we are not doing it on our own. Our prompting is from Ram."

Papa : "That may be. But it is all His lila. He does so many things from outside. He prompts Ramdas to do the right thing from within. From outside He may say, 'Yes', but if He does not agree from within, Ramdas cannot do anything except to follow the inner prompting."

Another devotee : "You even refused to take the rotis offered by your Gurudev so lovingly. When questioned by the people, you said that though the Guru commanded you from outside to eat the rotis, the Guru from within prompted you not to eat them and so you had no option other than to refuse the rotis."

Papa : "Yes, so you remember that incident."

Harkishanlal : "We shall then ask Mataji and see what she says. If she agrees, perhaps you will have no objection as you say you are a child."

Papa : "Go and talk to Mataji about it. Let us see what she says."

They two went and told Mataji about the sammelan and their wish that Papa should attend it at least one day. Mataji emphatically refused, saying that such sammelans representing only a particular aspect, sect or circle were not meant for Papa, as he had broken all limitations and gone beyond. The friends insisted again and again, but got from her only the emphatic reply, 'no'. They came back to Papa and explained what they heard from Mataji. They further pleaded that Papa should not give any excuse, but must agree to attend the sammelan at least one day, as they thought that otherwise the sammelan would be so little to the purpose. He could come and attend the conference one evening and, if necessary, return next morning. They further prayed that Papa should not disappoint them.

On hearing their insistent appeal, Papa seemed somewhat moved in favour of attending the function. Taking advantage of this, Harkishanlal asked Papa : "Swamiji what would be the most suitable day for you?"

Papa : "How can you fix up a day when nothing has been decided ? Mataji is quite against Ramdas attending it and so what can he do ? He is only a child obeying the commands of the mother."

Harkishanlal : "But, Swamiji, if a child is very obstinate the mother yields. So also if you are obstinate, our mother will agree to your attending the sammelan."

Papa (*after a hearty laugh*) : "No, this mother does not yield."

Now Mataji was seen standing near the door leading to the hall from Papa's bedroom. Taking this opportunity, Harkishanlal asked Mataji once again if she would not agree to Papa's attending the sammelan. She replied in the negative with an emphatic shake of the head.

Harkishanlal : "If you do not agree here, I may have to come to Bhavnagar ashram for this purpose again."

Mataji : "Yes, come by all means. That ashram has been built only for you all. Do come."

Harkishanlal : "If I come there I will not return empty-handed."

Mataji : "You can fill your hands and return."

Harkishanlal thought it was no use arguing further with Mataji and gave up his case as lost. With great disappointment the friends left after some time.

After they had left, Natverlal Parikh asked Papa why he was so firm in his refusal.

Papa : "Ramdas is after all a child. How can he sit with the big swamis in the sammelan ? That is why Ram prevents him from giving his consent to the proposal."

Natverlal : "But if your attending the conference would be of utility to the public, why should Ram not permit you to attend ?"

Papa : "Whether it will be of utility or futility, Ram knows. If it will be of any utility, Ramdas believes that Ram would permit him. But as He does not do so, Ramdas has to take it that it will be only futility." (*Laughter*)

481. 5 p.m. Papa and Mataji went to Matunga to attend the wedding of
Papa in a Radhe (daughter of Chandrasekhar B. Trikanad and Ramabai C.T.)
jovial mood with Gurudath Rao Nileshtar. After the ceremony they went to the
 residence of Chandrasekhar to see Papa's sister, Lakshmi Devi, who
was then very old and weak.

It was 7-45 p.m. when they returned to 'Shreyas'. A few devotees were waiting for them. In the course of the conversation Papa read out to them some pages at random from the new book, *World is God*.

When it was 9-30 p.m. Mataji came to the hall where Papa was sitting. That was the sign that the time was up for Papa to retire. Papa got up immediately. He had to retire early in order to be massaged by Pathak for an hour before sleep. All the devotees except Natverlal and his family left the place. Papa went to the bedroom accompanied by Natverlal, his wife, sons and daughters. That was the time when Papa cracked jokes.

The new massage started by Pathak had caused disappointment to all those friends, as otherwise they would sit near Papa and massage him, all the while laughing with Papa over Papa's wit and humour. But they were not to talk at all when Papa was being massaged. So Papa told them that the massage was different as it was without any witty talk. This caused laughter and Papa himself joined in it.

Then S. went to Papa with a glass of salt water and basin for gargle. Papa took the glass in his hand and was about to take a sip when he again started laughing. S. took the glass back and waited. Papa then said: "It is well Ramdas waits for sometime before he gargles. Otherwise he will spit out the whole water on you all."

Natverlal: "S. will be the first one to get it."

Papa: "Yes, he will have a fine shower-bath."

Again all laughed. S. suggested that it would be better if all kept quiet for some time as Papa would otherwise keep on laughing and not be able to gargle. All kept silent. The gargle was over.

S: "Sometimes even if others keep quiet, Papa himself thinks of the jokes and laughs."

Arvind: "Papa, this evening we were watching the sunset from here. Just when the sun sank into the sea, S. remarked that it was like Papa leaving a house."

Papa: "He has started talking in poetic language." (*All laugh*)

Natverlal: "He must have got it by long contact with Papa, is it not?"

Papa: "Ramdas is not a poet."

Natverlal: "Still Papa is writing poems."

Papa: "Ram is writing."

S: "Then Ram is the poet."

Papa: "Ram is everything. Why should he not be a poet also?"

Now Papa was sitting on the cot. The masseur was by his side, and the others were standing in front of him.

Papa: "What next?"

Arvind: "Is this not a polite way of saying that we should all go out?"

Papa laughed and folded both his hands as if doing namaskar.

Arvind: "This is like saying good night."

All laughed, made pranams to Papa, and left the room. The main light was switched off and the masseur started the massage.

Bombay, January 2, 1956

482. There were a few devotees sitting near Papa. One of them asked,
Saint— "How to recognise a saint?"
recognition
difficult Papa: "To recognise a saint is very difficult. They say a saint
 alone can recognise another saint. But Ramdas would say that it is
sometimes difficult even for a saint to say whether another person is a real saint or
not. The reason is this. A saint is one who has realised God, who sees God
everywhere. Then how can he say that one man is a saint and another is not."

Devotee: "But a saint can say whether God is playing the part of a genuine
saint or a bogus saint. God is playing different parts."

Papa: "Outwardly He may play any part. The saint looks only within and
there he sees God alone."

Devotee: "So what are we to do when we cannot decide whether one is a
saint or not?"

Papa: "You can make pranams from a distance. Don't approach too near. If
you do so"

Natverlal: ". . . . you will be burnt."

Papa : "You can look upon all as the manifestations of God and make pranams to them. You cannot decide whether they have realised God or not. You need not sit in judgement on saints. There are many saints about whom people talk all sorts of things. At the same time we find there are many who are very much devoted to those saints. Now who is right and who is wrong? There was a famous saint. He lived in America for many years and had a large following both in America and Europe. Ramdas heard unfavourable reports about him from some people. He also saw many of his devotees imbued with spiritual fervour. Surely they had benefited very much from his contact. Recently Ramdas had a letter from an Englishman saying that he was a disciple of that saint from whose contact he was greatly benefited. For some months he was greatly perturbed because he heard not too savoury reports about his Guru from a man who is very well known to Ramdas and who is on the Vedantic path for thirty years. Ramdas wrote back saying that he should not be worried about the opinion of others. His faith should be firm in spite of all criticism levelled against his Guru. Ramdas also said that the saint was a God-man. That will help him to recover his faith."

483. The devotees of Bombay were anxious to see the film of Papa's
Some fun world tour. As the hall at 'Shreyas' was not large enough to
 accommodate the number of devotees who might turn up, Surya
Prakash arranged with Harkishanlal to have the show in the big hall at Prem Kutir.
The show started at 7. The hall was full to overflowing. Papa sat on the raised dais
with Sri Swami Premपुरी Maharaj and Swami Nirmal Sant. Premपुरी Maharaj was
staying in one of the flats in Prem Kutir and Nirmal Sant, who had come recently,
was giving discourses daily at Prem Kutir.

After the show, Harkishanlal, the owner of the building, requested Papa kindly to visit his flat and bless his old father who was ill. Papa went with him and spent a few minutes with the patient.

When Papa returned to 'Shreyas' it was past ten. Many devotees were waiting for him. They were listening to the talks of Papa on a recorder. When Papa entered, the machine was stopped. Papa had talks with the devotees for an hour. He then adjourned to the bedroom.

Mataji, Lingappa and S. were busy packing things. Papa was to have the usual massage. So it would take some time for him to sleep. He asked Mataji why he should not retire then. Mataji told him that he might retire soon but that the massage should not be cancelled under any circumstance. Natverlal's family was seated in front of Papa. Papa kept on talking to them, cracking jokes and making them laugh. In the meantime Mataji was busy packing as they had to leave for Bhavnagar the following day.

Natverlal's wife suddenly remembered something, got up and went to Mataji to inform her of it. Her daughter and daughter-in-law followed her. When Papa found his audience thinning out, he burst into laughter saying : "When Mataji is here all go to her, asking if they should do this or do that and what not, and Ramdas is left alone. Nobody cares to sit with him when she is there. Ramdas simply watches the fun."

There were peals of laughter. Hearing that remark and the laughter, Mataji came in laughing and said that actually there was nobody working with her except S. and Lingappa, and Chandrakalaben came only to remind her of something. Papa just laughed.

January 3, 1956

484. All got up very early to start on the journey to Bhavnagar. **Departure for Bhavnagar** Narottam Shah had informed Papa about the expected arrival of Sati Godavari Mata in Bombay and also of her desire to see Papa. She was due at 6 o'clock in the morning and Papa was to be at the airport at 7-15 a.m. So, to make things easy, Papa himself suggested that he would go to the house of Sri Ranchhoddas, where she would be, and spend a few minutes with her. At 5-50 a.m. Narottam Shah reported that Sati Godavari Mata had arrived.

All started from 'Shreyas' at 6 a.m. and drove to Ranchhoddas's house to spend fifteen minutes with Godavari Mata and the kanyas. Godavari Mata enquired about the health of Papa and Mataji and requested Papa to visit Sakori on their way back from Bombay to the ashram. Papa, however, expressed his inability.

The party reached the aerodrome around 7-15 a.m. and the plane took off at 7-45 a.m. with Papa and party, Gunvantrai Kamdar and his wife.

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 3, 1956

485. The plane landed at Bhavnagar at 9 o'clock. Papa and Mataji were **Saint free from discipline** received at the aerodrome by Sumatilal Kamdar and other devotees. By 9-30 a.m. they were in Ramdas-ashram. Immediately on arrival, a large number of devotees waiting there greeted Papa and Mataji. Gunvantrai Kamdar performed Papa's pada-pooja. After a short bhajan, the devotees dispersed.

Being the first day of Papa's stay there many devotees had yet to come and regular programmes had not been arranged. However, there were about a dozen men and women sitting in front of Papa in the afternoon. S. went and sat near Papa, when suddenly Papa turned towards him and asked : "Have you seen a fully realised saint in the West or in the East?"

S (*after some thought*): "Papa himself said yesterday or so that it is extremely difficult for a person to say whether another has advanced spiritually or not. Then how can I answer this question?"

Papa: "Yes. You are perfectly right. It is very difficult to say anything about the state of another. A saint is absolutely free from all worldly and spiritual disciplines. That means, an ordinary person is caught up in the worldly things whereas a saint is completely free from them. A man on the spiritual path is strictly tied up to his spiritual disciplines. But a saint is free even from these disciplines. A saint's actions are spontaneous, and flow out as prompted by the Divine. He lives, moves and does all acts only for the benefit of others."

XLVI

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 3, 1956

486. Mataji had been dictating since 1950 her life-story at intervals, some of long duration. The narration had reached the period when **Mataji on her autobiography** Papa and Mataji came to Kanhangad. With a view to completing the story early, S. approached her, notebook in hand, when Mataji remarked : "My mind is mostly in the ashram now. So I do not feel like doing anything about the book here. Secondly I am not at all satisfied with the style of writing. I cannot write in Papa's style. I want to bring out all the aspects. For example, the quarrels and misbehaviour of some devotees. How can I avoid mentioning such things ? Why should these not be mentioned ? Is there no place for such things in the book ? Are there not quarrels in households ? Don't children quarrel ? Our quarrel is only like that. It bursts out for a moment and afterwards it is all quiet. I feel that if we do not mention such aspects, the sadhakas who are supposed to benefit from the book will find it extremely difficult to walk on the path when they meet with such situations. They must be able to understand all the aspects of our life."

January 4, 1956

487. 10 a.m. The morning bhajan was over. Papa was back in his room and a few devotees were sitting in front of him. More devotees were coming in one by one. **Surrender must follow sadhana**

Papa : "Worldly things or God can be had if you intensely long for them. After intensely longing for them you must let go the longing. Leave the matter to God and then your desire is fulfilled. So long as you are longing and longing without allowing God to play His part, it will only be a protracted struggle. You place yourself always in a state of anxiety and fear as long as you feel that you yourself can get things done. Stop worrying and leave everything in the hands of God : immediately the result is attained. You set an arrow to the bow, pull the string, and let go. Instead, if you go on pulling and pulling, the arrow won't be shot at all. Do you think that by worrying you can achieve anything ? No. You must leave it to Him after doing your part. The trouble is, you do not allow God to do His part.

"When your mind is silent, it does not come in the way of God playing His part. This is the secret of success. Churning the curds is all right, but after having churned for some time you have to stop doing so and allow the butter to be formed. Instead, if you go on churning and churning, butter can never be obtained. So also, when you have a problem in your hands, you must think about it, work hard for the attainment of your object and then sit silent, leaving everything to Him, without thinking any more about the problem. Keep the mind still, calm and serene. It is in the still mind that divine power, light and joy act and reflect.

"It is a custom in India that whenever people want to undertake some important work, say, conducting a marriage, the construction of a house or the like, they first go to a temple or to a saint, receive blessings and feel assured that the undertaking will be crowned with success. In the holy atmosphere of the temple or in the presence of a saint, for the moment they forget everything about the problem and consequently their mind is calm and serene. They then go out into the world and set to work and God fulfils their task. Therefore it is said that in the beginning of any undertaking you have to do some worship for propitiating a higher power to help you.

"Many people say that they do not realise their object however much they struggle. Struggle is a sure condition of progress, but struggle is not the end. Struggle is only a means. At a certain stage you must cease struggling.

"Ramdas often remembers the story of the two frogs that fell into a pot of curds. The inside surface of the pot was very smooth. The frogs could not get out without finding some foothold. After struggling for some time the bigger frog said to the other, 'There is no chance of our escape. Let us sink and die. Why should we struggle at all when we know our struggle will never end in success?' To this the younger frog replied, 'I will struggle to get out as long as I have life in my body.' The bigger one kept quiet, sank down and died while the other kept on struggling to find a way out. After some time it was tired and could not move its limbs any more. It became quiet and was floating. By the constant movement of the frog the curd was sufficiently churned and when the frog became quiet, a big lump of butter was formed. Now the frog got its hold on the butter and from there jumped out of the pot. The bigger one died in the pot itself. If the other frog had not stopped its effort to get out, the butter would not have been formed and it could not have escaped."

488. Continuing, Papa said: "When we leave things to a higher power
Total we get the opportunity to rise higher. Churning is necessary, but
surrender sees stopping it is also necessary. Surrender to God, saying, 'O God, I
miracles am in your hands,' and remain blissful. This surrender brings the
 result quickly. Don't you think so? This is practical philosophy."

A devotee: "But the line of demarcation is very difficult to find."

Papa : "You must know the technique of keeping the mind still. This is of course difficult. But saints teach you how to do it. Take the name of God and ask the mind to keep quiet and allow God to work. The moment you feel, 'O God, I am nothing, you are everything ; I am entirely in your hands,' your mind is automatically free from other thoughts and is calm. Surrender means realisation of whatever you wish to achieve. The company of saints is essential. In their company the waves of your mind cease. Even Draupadi, who was closely associating with Lord Krishna, did not know the secret of surrender until light dawned on her by His grace. She then did the right thing at the end, although in the beginning she was trying to defend herself. Dussasana was trying to disrobe her. She was calling on Krishna, but at the same time trying to protect herself. Krishna did not come to her rescue. But when she let go both her hands and entirely put herself in the hands of Krishna, He came and helped her. We are calling on God to help us and at the same time we are trying to solve our problems ourselves. Listen to a story. Such stories give us courage and lead us on the right path. (*Papa narrates the story of Damaji Pant. Refer to paragraph 75, page 72*)

"You all know the story of Narsi Mehta. These are not imaginary or concocted stories. Here and there, in the lives of devotees, such miracles have happened. This attitude of surrender does not remain always. Whenever such moments come, miracles are worked by a mysterious power. That power is God whom you trust, to whom you pray, and to whom you hand yourself over. When a vacuum is formed, air rushes in from all sides. So also when your mind is free from all thoughts and desires by surrender to the Divine, help comes from all sides. By the surrender you release many forces outside, which help you in every way. Even those who were opposed to you, now come to help you. That is the mysterious power of God. These two or three instances are enough to show the result of surrender to God."

A devotee : "We have to ensure that surrender is not tamasic. In day-to-day work, surrender is difficult."

Papa : "You must work in a state of surrender. Surrender and work are not against each other. Surrender does not mean idleness. The devotee says, 'O God, I am your instrument and you are making me do everything.' Become the servant of Ram. The Lord is always watching, guiding and inspiring His servant."

It was time for Papa to bathe. Mataji's call had come. The devotees got up and left the room. Papa went for his bath.

12 noon. After lunch Papa was just pacing the room prior to his usual afternoon rest. A young man dressed in white, one cloth round his waist and another over his body, with another piece covering his mouth, peeped in. From his dress it could be made out that he was a Jain muni. He greeted Papa, still peeping in through the curtain. Papa went near him. The Jain sadhu talked to Papa in high pitch about

the dharma of absolute ahimsa they were supposed to follow and how it was sinful for one to give trouble or even think ill of others. One Gujarati friend (Kanubhai, nephew of G.T. Kamdar) informed Papa that the Jain sadhu had been refused food and shelter by other Jain sadhus because of some petty differences. Papa called the Jain sadhu to come in and sit. The sadhu appeared to be reluctant to walk or even place his feet on the carpet spread in the room. Kanubhai then explained to Papa that he would not sit there. Papa told the sadhu : "If you are not sitting, Ramdas also is not going to sit." So they kept standing and talking for some time till the sadhu left.

489. 7 p.m. A middle-aged stranger entered Papa's room when he was
No disciples, sitting there after his evening meal. The visitor saluted Papa and sat
only friends at a distance. He started asking a few questions. As Papa could not
 hear him, he asked him to come near.

Visitor : "You are going to give us your divine company for some months. It is a blessing."

Papa : "Ramdas will be here for about two months."

Visitor : "What is your caste ?"

Papa : "No caste."

Visitor : "Your former caste ?"

Papa : "No caste ; no brahmin, no kshatriya, no vaisya, no sudra. He has no caste."

Visitor : "Is it so ? It may be at present. What about the former caste ?"

Papa : "No former, no latter."

Visitor : "I am a brahmin, I am a brahmin."

Papa : "Is it so ?"

Visitor : "Can you accept me as your disciple—your humble disciple ?"

Papa : "Ramdas has no disciples. He has only friends."

Visitor : "I want to be your disciple."

Papa : "No. Ramdas has no disciples at all. All are his friends. No disciple, no guru. All are the manifestations of God. Where is the guru and where is the disciple then ?"

The visitor had apparently nothing more to talk. After keeping quiet for some time he got up and left the room.

January 5, 1956

490. 10 a.m. After the morning bhajan, when Papa was back in his Great to know room, a sadhu came and prostrated before Papa. Papa greeted himself to with the words, "O Maharaj, *Kripa Rakhna*," and enquired about his be little whereabouts. He said he was coming from a place nearby. Sai Sattar Shah was also sitting near Papa. The sadhu spoke a few words to Sai Sattar Shah and asked him how he happened to be there. He replied, "I came here because Swamiji is here. I will stay as long as he is here."

Hearing that remark, Papa, with folded hands, said to Sai Sattar Shah, "It is your grace alone that has made you come here and give your sweet company to Ramdas. How gracious saints are! They come of their own accord and give us darshan."

At this the sadhu, who had taken his seat on the carpet by the side of Papa's chair, said, "Where there is jaggery, flies and insects automatically swarm round. We are all flies or insects and you are jaggery."

Papa laughed and said : "It is better to be an ant than to become sugar itself."

Sai Sattar Shah : "It is always happier to remain a little thing ; to bend down rather than keep one's head erect. A tree that bears fruit keeps its head down by the weight of the fruits. That which has no fruits keeps its branches erect. So saints who are full with the realisation of God, are very humble. They have no abhiman in them. Suppose a child is seen in the street, left alone. Anybody would lift it up with love and do all that is necessary to take it to the proper place. If it is a grown-up boy or a man, nobody would care. If at all they help, they just show him the way. So it is always better to be small. You see big and small vessels. How do you keep them ? All big vessels below and the smallest on the top !"

Papa : "There is a beautiful saying in English, 'It is little to know oneself to be great and it is great to know oneself to be little.'"

The sadhu got up, prostrated before Papa and Sai Sattar Shah and left the room.

January 6, 1956

491. 9-45 a.m. Morning bhajan was over. Papa was sitting in his Poetical room. Sai Sattar Shah was sitting on a chair near Papa and some homage devotees on the floor in front of Papa. Mukundrai with Prajarambhai to Mataji who was the Principal of the local Ayurvedic College, came in. Mukundrai was the secretary in Kamdar's office. Papa knew both these young men. As soon as they entered, Papa greeted them saying, "Ah, the two poets have come. Sit down."

argumentative nature I have inherited. I wanted to come yesterday, but I could not. I met R. S. Joshi, the Professor here, and had a frank discussion with him. He tried to explain to me ; but I was not satisfied. I told him that I would come and discuss matters with you. But I feel diffident. While Joshi is a samsari, you are on a higher level. How can I open my heart and speak to you ?"

Papa : "You can."

Devotee : "One of my desires is that I should come to your ashram at Kasaragod and stay there for some time."

Papa : "Our ashram is not in Kasaragod, but in Kanhangad."

Devotee : "I went by boat to Mangalore, but could not come to you. I want blessings from you so that I can feel a little peace which I do not get at all. I was originally in Bombay with very high hopes, but all those hopes were shattered and I became miserable in every respect. I was once an ambitious man, but not now. I wish I could spend the remaining days of my life in peace. Sometimes I wish my end comes soon."

Papa : "You should not get so much dispirited."

Devotee : "But what shall I do ? There is nobody to listen to me."

Papa : "You should not give way to such grief or dejection. You must take heart."

Devotee : "Where to get that ?"

Papa : "You have got a heart ; take it. It is not a heart that comes from outside. You must be courageous. Life is a trial for everybody, more bitter for some and less bitter for others ; but all the same it is a trial for all. In moments of despair you should take courage."

Devotee : "I cannot spend the whole day in namasmaran. I do my best ; and whatever I do, I do in all sincerity. When I make a beginning, I can concentrate on it. But now the repetition of Ramnam has become mechanical, so automatic that there is no concentration at all. The mind wanders and I find there is no use sitting for japa. I want to know one thing. Suppose I drive a car and meet with an accident. Then who has brought about the accident—Ram or myself ?"

Papa : "When you are in the hands of Ram, it is Ram who does everything. Accidents do happen, which cause pain to others or even death in some cases, without our intending anything. Even such actions should be attributed to God. When good things are done we attribute them to God, why should we not attribute

evil things also to Him? Surrender must be complete. You are not in any way trying to injure anybody purposely. But there is one thing. When you are conscious always that you are doing everything by His Will and Power, Ramdas does not think that you will be capable of driving in such a way as to cause accidents. No. Such an accident will never take place."

Devotee : "Is renunciation necessary for spiritual progress?"

Papa : "Inner renunciation is more necessary than outer renunciation. There are so many who have renounced outwardly. That does not mean they have really renounced anything. Inner renunciation must come. It is real detachment that is needed. Many believe that by external renunciation they will get internal renunciation also. This is not always true. It may be of help, but by the mere fact that one has renounced outwardly, it does not mean that he will get inner renunciation. When you attain inner renunciation or inner transformation, your whole life is changed."

Devotee : "We are in this world and we believe that people should multiply and the creation should be kept up. Some people have the will or the courage to renounce everything, and so they advance spiritually. Those like me are not able to do so. Therefore, am I not obliged to perform the duties assigned to me?"

Papa : "If you feel so, do your duties cheerfully. Face all trials bravely."

Devotee : "If He gives us the duty, He must give us the courage also."

Papa : "The question is whether you do it as duty enjoined upon you by Him or whether you have taken it upon yourself. If you take it upon yourself, then it will be accompanied by frustration, disappointment, pain and misery. If you feel that it is enjoined upon you by God, you will cheerfully face everything. As Ramdas has already told you, life is a trial for everybody. There are times when we have to meet with disappointments on account of troubles and losses. We must face up to all such situations."

Devotee : "Now I have lost all mental courage and physical courage too. Nowadays I am too weak even to walk."

Papa : "As the changes take place in you, you must keep up the even tenor of your mind and be cheerful. Face things bravely and get along. Never get depressed or dispirited."

493.

Devotee : "How to do that? Suppose my child is suffering."

**Help to a
devotee**

Papa : "That is true for everybody ; not only you. Everybody has to face trouble one way or other. Should we succumb to such things? We must rise above all these mundane affairs. We have to submit to the will of God and allow Him to play His part in our life."

Devotee : "I believe in Him and still I complain."

Papa : "Mere half-hearted belief won't do. Your faith must be so intense and your surrender so complete that you leave everything to Him. Then He guides, inspires, helps and protects you."

Devotee : "Can the guru not help us in times of difficulties ?"

Papa : "Ramdas is ready to help you. He tries his best to help all struggling souls."

Devotee : "Let me feel your guidance. Last time I requested you to bless me and I bowed before you. I did not feel anything. But when you patted me on my back, oh, that put so much courage in me that I thought I could carry on for a year."

Papa : "If you get such pats again, you should be able to carry on for the rest of your life."

Devotee : "It is for that I have come here." (*with tears in his eyes, he falls at Papa's feet*)

Papa (*patting him on the back*) : "Don't lose courage. Be cheerful. God is with you. You have suffered much and that suffering must bring you the necessary help from the divine. You will have courage and a steady mind."

The devotee got up, still sobbing, and left the room.

January 6, 1956

494. 7 p.m. The Maharaja of Bhavnagar was expected for the bhajan.
Maharaja's In view of the visit, special arrangements were made in the ashram
visit by the Kamdar family.

At 7-10 p.m. the Maharaja arrived with the members of his family. Papa rose to welcome them. The Maharaja garlanded Papa; the Maharani and the Yuvarani (her daughter-in-law) garlanded Mataji who was sitting a few yards away from Papa. The Maharaja and his sons took their seats on the chairs provided. The ladies sat on the floor beside Mataji.

Maharaja (*after garlanding Papa*) : "This is the welcome to you. It has been a great pleasure to us all."

Papa : "How are you ? All right ?"

Maharaja : "We are very pleased you have come and will be with us for . . ."

Papa : "We are going to stay for two months."

Maharaja : "I am so delighted to hear that."

Papa : "This place attracts us more than any other, because the love and devotion of the people here is unique."

Maharaja : "Actually I remember you by your blessings. Last time when you gave your blessings to my son to pass his B.A. examination, he passed with credit. Now you will please bless our second son so that he may get married soon. I heard you had been on a tour round the world. How was the tour?"

Papa : "Everywhere we were received with great devotion and love and we had a very happy tour."

Maharaja : "Which country impressed you most?"

Papa : "All countries. The same question was put to Ramdas by many friends. He cannot say one country is better than another. Everywhere he was received with love and affection."

Maharaja : "Yes, we are very fortunate in having you here. Did you visit Russia?"

Papa : "No, we could not. We were told it was very cold there. We could not go as a private body as there were many technical difficulties. Our visit had to be sponsored by the Government."

Maharaja : "But your visit was sponsored by Ram ! So they could not have raised any objection."

Papa : "Ram produced certain favourable conditions. His ways are mysterious. It is by His will that we went round the world. Don't know why He did not take us to Russia. We covered 35,000 miles and we were on the air about 132 hours. We flew from one country to another. Only within the countries we travelled by car. We had a round-the-world ticket and could travel by any airline. We wished to see the Pope, but could not get an audience because of his illness. We saw the St. Peter's Church. Ramdas's talks were taken down by Satchidananda who acted as secretary, and he has now typed out all the notes. We are publishing these talks in small volumes of a hundred pages each. Ramdas has written a book *World is God*. It contains all the details and incidents connected with the tour, together with pictures of all the important persons we met and who were our hosts. It is just out. We shall send you a copy."

Maharaja : "I will get the whole set of books and read them."

Papa : "People want to know what we did in the western countries. The latest book will give an idea. We had lectures, questions and answers, in Universities, Y.M.C.A., and so forth."

Maharaja : "My wife is so much delighted that you are here and she wants to take part in the bhajan every evening. She is enjoying the company of Mother Krishnabai very much. So my wife and children will be here regularly."

Papa : "We will be exceedingly happy. You have drawn us here. That is why we have come."

Maharaja : "Please bless the children."

Papa : "All have the blessings of God."

Maharaja : "Please come to my house and take meals with us one day."

Papa : "Yes, we shall do so."

Maharaja : "It will be a great joy for us. The season is also very good here. My wife is very fond of bhajan. Sai Sattar Shah is famous in these parts."

Sai Sattar Shah (*seated near Papa*) : "My health is not very good."

Papa : "Still he sings for us two or three songs everyday."

Sai Sattar Shah : "The body gets ill sometime or other."

Papa (*after a few minutes*) : "Taking Ramnam, Ramdas went round the world. Everybody wanted to hear Ramnam. Ramdas joined with them and sang Ramnam. They wanted to sit with Ramdas for meditation. We all sat together for half an hour or so. We had this practice of meditation in almost all places. They all have read something of the Indian philosophy and put very intelligent questions. If they take up something, they do it seriously and never leave it half done."

Mukutbhai Kamdar came in and requested Papa and others to attend the bhajan which was about to start in the hall outside.

Maharaja : "Yes, we have come for that. Let us go there."

They left after the bhajan. Papa gave the Maharaja the flower garlands brought by them, as prasad.

**Mataji's
pointer to
realize truth
in entirety**

During bhajan Mataji and S. remained in the room. Mataji tried to peep outside. S. asked her why ?

Mataji : "I just looked to see where the Maharani is sitting. When Papa was talking to the Maharaja, she was all the while talking to me. This is the first time she ever talked so much to me. She sat very close to me and kept on talking. Only Chandrakalaben talks to me so. When she is near me she feels herself like a child. Though many others also move with me very closely, nobody else does like Chandrakalaben. When I say something and she does not understand it, she goes on asking me again and again its exact meaning."

S : "What about your autobiography ? When are you going to dictate ? Should we not start sitting for it an hour everyday ?"

Mataji : "My mind is still in the ashram. Whenever I try to think of something deeply, the thought of the ashram comes. Further, nobody understands my writings or talks. The same thing when said by some other saint, they understand. For example, I used to talk of various things to Anandi Nagarkatti. She was unable to make head or tail of what I said. Later when she went to Shirali and heard the pravachans of Swami Anandashram, she could understand my talk.

"Now I talk about something in the affirmative ; after sometime I talk about the same thing in the negative. People think that I am making contradictory statements or telling falsehood. Suppose I saw the back of a person. I can very well say that I saw that person. Can I not say also that I did not see him, since I did not see his face ? So at one place I may say I saw him and at another place that I did not see him. In both cases I am right. But those who read it may feel I am telling a lie or that I am indulging in a loose argument. So when you note down my story, what you should do is this : whenever there is a possibility of such misunderstanding, you should immediately stop me there and then and ask questions to clarify the point."

S : "Why not explain each point clearly ?"

Mataji : "Certain problems may not strike me at all. You have to remind me when such points arise."

S : "The notes taken down so far by Swami Krishnananda and Ramaswami were exactly as you told them. There were no questions at all. In the early days they were asking questions and the progress was slow. So they had to give up questioning."

Mataji : "Because of that, you will see in many places the matter cannot be understood properly. My main concern is that what I write should help sadhakas. They should not have any doubt when they read it. All aspects of every point must

be made quite clear. Suppose there is an ulcer in my hand. The bottom layer gives pain and the top does not. So I am right when I say it gives pain and I am right also when I say it does not give pain."

S: "It is not only that we should understand, but all readers must understand. Unless we make every point clear, it will be difficult for them to understand."

Mataji: "I feel it is not worthwhile writing. For what should we write? It is for the spiritual benefit of sadhakas. Papa has given us every convenience to advance on the path. When he took me on the path, he sent me to various houses to serve, so that I might quickly advance and realise that all are the forms of Papa. Now there is enough facility for all to serve in the ashram. But that is not taken advantage of. We have to widen our vision gradually first by accepting Papa as our own, then all in the ashram, and then the whole world. You all are not even prepared to accept the ashram as yours. How then can you go further and accept the world and universe as yours?"

S: "Is this acceptance not actual experience?"

Mataji: "But before you get the experience, you have to train your mind. Mind has a great power. You can gradually increase the circle of love from your mother, father, wife, children and so on to Papa who is the whole world, till you finally feel that the universe is Papa's form and that Papa is beyond that also. As you experience that you and Papa are one, you will realise that you are the entire universe."

S: "The experience of that which is beyond the world comes first; then comes the experience of oneness with the world. Is it not so?"

Mataji: "Yes, but the mental acceptance that Papa is the whole universe leads you to the experience of the formless, nameless aspect of Papa. When you come down from that experience you also know that you are the whole universe. But this experience fades away. It takes some time before one is established in it. When one is established in the experience of the nirguna aspect which is beyond all name, form and movement, one sees oneself as the universe. Until then, the experience comes and goes. It requires some effort to connect the manifest and the unmanifest aspects. It takes some time to realise that both are aspects of the same Truth and that they co-exist."

XLVII

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 7, 1956

496. After breakfast, Papa was dictating letters to S. A young man of
Ramnam about twentyfive years came in and sat near Papa. Soon Papa
all-inclusive stopped the dictation saying: "That will do for today. Ramdas
 wants to speak to this young man."

Papa (*to the young man*): "You see, Vyas who came with you yesterday was telling us many things about you. It seems your people at home think you have become useless to the world and have no interest in taking up any work since you met Ramdas. But Ramdas does not think it is after meeting Ramdas. Vyas also said that you have not been quite normal, right from childhood. How then can they say that it is due to contact of Ramdas? Why do you not take up some work? They say that you are simply wasting your time."

Young man: "Papa, I shall explain the facts. I was working in the local rubber factory for three and a half years. My mother took ill and I had to take long leave to serve her. On that account they dismissed me from service. After some time I was temporarily employed for eight months, I could have continued there, but again I had to apply for leave on account of my mother's illness. I was asked to go away. From that time I have been practically unemployed."

Papa: "Did Vyas not know about all this? Why did he talk to Ramdas differently?"

Young man: "They all think I am idling away my time. I request Papa to do this for me. I am too poor to have any "Yajnopavita" ceremony done for me. Will you kindly initiate me and give me the yajnopavita (sacred thread) without any ceremony?"

Papa (*laughing*): "How old are you? What is the use of having yajnopavita at this age? You ought to have been given that at your eighth or ninth year. Further what is the use of taking it from Ramdas? You want to have it just to satisfy the public. Surely, others will not be satisfied if you put it on without ceremony. If it is only for your satisfaction what is the use of yajnopavita at all? Ramdas has given you Ramnam. Ramnam includes yajnopavita, Gayatri and everything. Ramdas

had a daughter in his purvashram. When her first son was of proper age, her people wished he should be given the sacred thread in the orthodox way. She said Ramdas should give him Ramnam and that would do. She firmly believed that Ramnam was everything. If you continuously repeat the Ramnam that Ramdas has given you, you do not need anything more."

The young man was not quite satisfied but Papa was not prepared to give him the sacred thread. Papa asked him to take up a job early and assured him that since he had lost the job only on account of the leave taken for serving his mother, he was sure to get a job again with the mother's blessings. Papa added, "Service of the mother should be given the first place. All else next. The Upanishad says, 'Matru Devo Bhava.'"

Young man : "They say I am getting rusty, simply taking food at home and doing nothing."

Papa : "You will have to bear all such things if you sit idle. Try to get a job soon."

497. 10-30 a.m. Papa was sitting in his room. Near him were Sai 'Tera Panth' Sattar Shah, Mukutbhai Kamdar, Gunvantrai Desai of Bombay and a young Maharashtrian boy. That boy had been coming regularly and spending long hours with Papa. Looking at the boy, Papa remarked : "This boy has fallen in love with Ramdas. He comes here and stays till he goes to school and comes again after school. Young boys are easily caught. It is difficult for grown-up people to fall in. That was why Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say, 'Catch them young'. He gives a beautiful illustration for this. We have to offer ourselves to God. We must do so when we are young and fresh. But people in their youth spend all their days in the enjoyment of the senses, and when their senses are weak, they say to God, 'O God ! I offer my whole life to you'. This is just like offering God a leaf on which you have taken your food. Those who dedicate their life to God from childhood on are really great. As long as we have the desire for sense-enjoyment, we cannot have interest in doing bhajan or other spiritual practices."

Mataji, who was in the bhajan-hall, came in and asked S. to see who were waiting outside. S. went out and saw the Jain sadhu who had come there a couple of days ago. Two other Jain sadhus were with him. They carried with them their brushes, and each of them had a big bag containing something heavy. They wanted to see Papa. Papa was about to go for bath. Learning that the Jain sadhus had come, he came out with Sai Sattar Shah and greeted them with folded hands.

Jain sadhu : "I have come today with my elder gurubhais. We are going away tomorrow and so wished to have your darshan today. We belong to the Tera Panth. 'Tera Panth' means 'your path'. We say to God : It is 'Tera Panth' that we

follow. So ours is known as 'Tera Panth'. We have no headquarters. We just keep moving about. Our Guru Maharaj is called Tulsiji. He is a great saint and may come to the South some time, as he has pressing invitations. Our discipline is based on the five basic principles of satya, ahimsa, brahmacharya, aparigraha and asteya. We observe this discipline and go about from place to place."

Papa : "Very glad you gave us your darshan here."

Mama, who looked after the affairs in the ashram, took them to the kitchen.

498. Mataji and S. were in the room. S. was typing and Mataji was standing a few feet behind him, folding some clothes. Within a couple of minutes Mataji came near S. and addressing him said :
Accept Papa as mother "I had better tell you when I remember. The easiest path to attain oneness with Papa is to accept him as Mother. That is the best way, especially to maintain brahmacharya. You look upon Papa as Mother ; that means you look upon all as the forms of Mother and yourself as a child of Her. When you have this attitude, lust will never overpower you and you can remain pure like a child."

S : "Yes, I understand. Surely that is the best way to be pure."

January 8, 1956

499. Papa's routine, in Ramdas-ashram, was : He got up by 6 o'clock.
Papa's daily routine Mataji got things for morning ablutions and called him into the bathroom. Afterwards S. was ready with the correspondence. Papa dictated some letters. By about 6-30 a.m. Lingappa brought Papa's breakfast—boiled rice, milk and pickles. After breakfast, Papa dictated a few more letters. Then Pathak gave a dose of homoeopathic medicine.

Dictation over by about 7 o'clock, he glanced through some book or other and then went to the water-closet. Coming back, he took a cup of water and a tablet of Berin. Then a few devotees would be present in the room. He talked to them till 8, and then took tea. Sai Sattar Shah would arrive. They would sit together for a while and attend bhajan in the hall at 8-30 a.m., which lasted till 9-30 a.m. By 9-45 a.m. Papa was back in the room with Sai Sattar Shah and a number of devotees. Satsang would continue till about 11 a.m. In between, he would take a cup of water.

On alternate days Papa took his shave at 11 a.m. Mataji had his bath prepared, which occupied a quarter of an hour. Lunch was served at 11-30 a.m. to Papa and Sai Sattar Shah. A few minutes after lunch the latter would take his leave. Retiring immediately after, Papa rose at 1 p.m., took the fruits kept ready, went through the post, translating important letters, if any, to Mataji. Until 2-15 p.m. he was engaged

in conversation with devotees and at 2-30 had his tea followed by Pathak's massage. He signed the outgoing letters at 4-30 p.m. and paced up and down the hall talking to devotees. He visited the houses of a few devotees and returned by 6 p.m. Supper was served at 6-30 p.m. in his room, where too he talked with some devotees. Bhajan was between 7-30 and 9 p.m. after which Papa, Sai Sattar Shah and the members of the Kamdar family retired to Papa's room ; in a few minutes Sattar Shah would take his leave. After a gargle, Papa retired for the night at 10 p.m. This was his daily routine. The unnumbered witty remarks he made on all and sundry topics that might arise in the course of the day was a regular feature wherever Papa happened to be.

500. 9-45 a.m. Papa's room. Bhajan was just over. Papa had come in and was sitting on the chair and some devotees were sitting in front. 'You are motherly' Prajaram Raval, the poet-friend, who was also the principal of the Ayurvedic College, came in, prostrated and sat near Papa on the floor.

Papa : "You are late this morning."

Raval : "This morning I was reading your book *World is God* and I have come up to Europe."

Papa : "So now you have to go to America ?"

Raval : "Yes. Today is Sunday. So I can remain with you longer. By reading the book I could feel how close to us you are. When we read about or think of other saints we feel they are far away and difficult to reach. But how different you are ! You are motherly. While reading the book I felt you were the mother distributing prasad to your children sitting in two rows—East and West. How kind you are ; how loving you are !"

Papa : "You have to go after the Father, but Mother comes to you."

Raval : "That is exactly what you are doing. Your going to European countries must have been a very great blessing for them."

Papa : "This book, *Ramdas Speaks* containing questions and answers, shows how anxious they are to know the Truth and how they have studied Hindu philosophy. Ramdas went there with the authority of God-realisation. Without that he would never have gone to teach them. What can one teach when one has not experienced God ? God prepared Ramdas and then sent him out to those places."

2-15 p.m. Seeing Maganlal Raichura entering the room, Papa exclaimed : "Ah ! you have come ! We were longing to see you. After all you have come !" (*Papa embraces Maganlal who prostrates before Papa and sits down*)

Maganlal : "The office and other work kept me too busy and Tara is unwell. So I could not come earlier."

Papa : "Ramdas thought you were angry with us."

Maganlal : "No. No. Why should I be angry ? I am not angry with anybody in the world."

Papa : "Ramdas is glad you have come. How is Tara's health ? What is wrong with her ?"

Maganlal : "She had a fall and sustained minor injuries, but she is better now."

501. A young man, George Dudley, had met Papa in London, kept
A devotee constant company with him and driven the car during his visits to
from England various places in London, Sussex and Matlock. On leaving England,
George had obtained Papa's reluctant permission to go over to India.
With assistance from Mr. W.A. Caro, George came to India in January 1955, and
had stayed at Anandashram. He spent a few days with some Buddhist friends at
Kalimpong and had also gone to Sri Ramanashram and Sri Aurobindo Ashram. He was
due back in England for which a friend from Holland staying then in Anandashram
helped him. George wanted to be with Papa as long as possible and with the
assistance of Natverlal G. Parikh, flew in from Bombay that morning. He was
accommodated in Kamdar's and took food at the ashram.

502. 9 p.m. After the evening bhajan, Papa, Sai Sattar Shah, Mataji and
Pada Tirtha, a number of devotees were in Papa's room. George was also here.
the sovereign While in the ashram he developed an ulcer in his foot, and it became
medicine septic. He tried all sorts of medicines with little benefit. Mataji
immediately prepared a medicated oil generally in use in
Anandashram. Soon after bhajan, S. dressed the wound with the medicated oil. Papa
was happy to see that George's wound was dressed properly. He asked George to
take care and not to allow the wound to get wet.

A devotee (to Mataji) : "As Mataji is a doctor, we would like to know some
of your medicines. Now we have come to know one medicine that you have given to
George. You might be knowing many more."

Mataji then gave a description of some indigenous medicines made out of
leaves available in Anandashram. She then said : "Above all these medicines, there
is another. That is Papa's pada tirtha. That does the trick."

Papa : "When somebody is sick in a house, they do not go straightway to the hospital. They come to Mataji and ask for Ramdas's pada tirtha. It is given and the patient recovers. There are cases of hard labour. Mataji sends them the tirtha and soon the delivery is over. Sometimes a cow struggles with labour pain and Mataji sends the tirtha which is poured into its mouth. Soon the delivery takes place.

"There was one Dr. Umanath Rao working in our dispensary. Before going to the hospital he would wash Ramdas's feet, fill the water in a bottle and take it with him to the hospital. Patients were all cured."

A devotee : "Faith is a wonderful thing. It really works wonders. We must give Mataji the honorary degree of M.D." (*All laugh*)

Those present prostrated and left. Papa went to the bathroom.

Mataji (*to S.*) : "Two or three months back the cow that had a bad fall and fractured her leg was in severe labour. Ambunhi and another were struggling to take the calf out. They found there was some obstruction. It was thought that they should cut the calf in pieces and take it out. It was a horrible thing. They asked me for the tirtha. In order to strengthen their faith I asked Ambunhi to go, wash Papa's feet himself and give the tirtha to the cow. He did so. Wonderfully enough, when he put his hand again to take the calf out, he found that the bone, which was causing the obstruction, slowly went in and the calf came out. Though there was great strain, both the calf and cow were saved. Due to great exertion in pulling out the calf, Ambunhi was spent out and had to rest. See how it works !"

S : "People who argue with their intellect cannot believe. They will go on giving various reasons for the safe delivery and never attribute it to the tirtha."

503. 9-45 p.m. All assembled in the room except Mataji, S. and
The book Lingappa, took their leave of Papa. Papa, with a sudden smile and
World is God laugh, asked Mataji for the book *World is God*. Mataji gave it to him and asked him what he was going to read at that time. He again laughed and said : "Ramdas wants to read the conclusion of the book. S. L. said that the book is very nice, especially the foreword and conclusion, and more so the conclusion. So Ramdas wants to see for himself if it is so nice as he says."

Mataji laughed.

S : "So Papa wants to see if S. L.'s statement is correct. Is it not ?"

Papa : "Yes, when somebody appreciates Ramdas's writings, he reads them again and again to make sure if they are so."

504. 9-30 a.m. Papa's room. Papa and Sai Sattar Shah were back in
On God- the room after the morning bhajan. A group of devotees came and
realisation sat in front of them.

Devotee : "When did you realise God ?"

Papa : "Thirty-three years ago."

Devotee : "May I know the exact date ?"

Papa : "27th December, 1922."

Devotee : "What is God-realisation ?"

Papa : "It is everything and it is nothing. To say that realisation was at such and such time is difficult, because God is infinite. To realise the infinite and get the fullness of that experience takes time. First you are established in one stage and from that you progress until you have that fullest experience of God in all His aspects. This growth is gradual until you blossom like a flower and then bear fruit. A bud becomes a flower only after it blooms fully.

"It is first a bud which gradually opens bringing out all its fragrance. But even as bud it has its own beauty. When fully blossomed it has a different type of beauty. Some people prefer to remain half-open. They want some beauty to be hidden. In any case all the different stages of blossoming are beautiful.

"In 1922 Ramdas found the world to be as good as non-existent for him. He was dead to the world and alive to the spiritual life. He was asleep to the world and awake to the divine within. That, Ramdas can say, was the time of his realisation of God. From then gradually the bud blossomed to its fullness and revealed itself. Ramdas cannot say exactly when the fruit became fully ripe and sweet."

Devotee : "What should a layman do in this regard ?"

Papa : "God must make the bud blossom into a beautiful and fragrant flower. It is not in your hands to make it blossom. Leave your life to God who will do what is necessary for you. Thirty-three years ago Ramdas had only very little faith in God. Later, his faith gradually grew and he felt that he was merely a child and God was the Mother holding his hand and leading him. Why God should lead one and not another is a mystery. Ramdas cannot solve it. Ramdas does not feel that there was anything extraordinary in him to deserve this special treatment from God. It was only His grace."

Devotee : "Without our becoming pure, how can we approach God?"

Papa : "You have only to approach God—your Mother. She will purify you. Mother will not ask you to get away from Her because you are impure. Even if we go with all our dirt, She bathes us clean, and takes us into Her lap. How can we purify ourselves? What does the child know? So what we have to do is only to be a child and approach God as Mother. We should not be obstinate children. We must stop our play and approach the Mother. What we do now is, even if the Mother calls, we fail to respond."

Devotee : "If the children play too long, mother comes and takes them away herself."

Papa : "It happens in extraordinary cases, and that too only with the youngest child."

Devotee : "Why does the mother send the child to play and get dirty?"

Papa : "As to that question, Mother and child are not different; they are one. The Mother has Herself become the whole universe consisting of all beings and creatures in it. She has become everything and is playing the eternal game. The so-called ignorance and the so-called knowledge are Hers alone. She is Prakriti. We are all forms of that prakriti. Actually we are She. Her game is wonderful!"

506. 5 p.m. Papa did not have the usual massage as he had pain all over the body and slight temperature. So after the noon talks, Papa was alone, mostly confined to the room. A group of devotees came in before 5 p.m. and sat in front of him. Soon the room became almost overcrowded and Papa suggested they might go and sit outside. But Mataji said that it would be better if Papa remained in the room as it was breezy in the hall. Papa agreed. For some time all sat quiet. Now an old man and two women from Sihore came in. Then came the young lawyer who had done all the questioning the previous evening. All sat silent.

Papa broke the silence by saying : "The question is how to do sadhana while living in the family. Yes, it may be hard. But it has to be done. Some people leave the house and run away. What about them? They do not attain anything."

Young lawyer : "But sadhana done in the house will be half-hearted. We cannot give the whole heart to God."

Papa : "What about those who run away? Can they keep their whole heart with God? They still have their desires and attachments. Sitting in the cave or jungle they think of their old connections and relations instead of thinking of God. Where is their heart—on the family or on God?"

"Ramdas has seen many people who renounced everything and went away for some time, but finding they were better off before, returned to their earlier life. There are others who later felt that it would have been better if they had remained householders ; but they found at the same time it was too late for them to go back. They suffer. Their mind is neither here nor there. What is the use of such a life ?

"Is it not then better to remain in the family and do sadhana ? The way is to take God's name, do good work and resort to satsang. If you do this as much as you can everyday, you are sure to progress on the path. People say it is hard nowadays to do sadhana at home. It is not at all hard if you have the real aspiration to realise God. Without keen aspiration for God there is no use even if one goes away from the household to caves and jungles. When one has intense aspiration to realise God and dispassion towards worldly enjoyments, he can attain his goal even if he is in the household.

"Once, many years ago, Ramdas met a sadhu in his wandering life. In a fit of vairagya he had left home and taken to sannyas. He carried on for some time. Later he found his mind was with his relatives and his meditations were all only a show. He was getting worried and anxious. Some other sadhus suggested that if he used ganja he would be all right. He got into the habit of taking ganja and fell a victim to it. When he was under the influence of ganja, he would lose his temper and do all sorts of things. Where is concentration or meditation then ? One day he had severe stomach-ache. He began to weep saying that the ache was due to the curse of his people at home. Ramdas asked him why he should worry about his people and their curse when he had nothing to do with them. Ramdas also told him if his mind was with the relatives it would be better for him to go back to the old life, earn his livelihood and be happy there. Ramdas did not see him for some time, but met him later in North India. He had gone back to his old life and was suffering a great deal as he could not get any work. That is the plight of those who get out of the house before they are actually ready for a dedicated life.

"Some friends argue that one cannot lead a straightforward life in the household, as they say, they have to tell many lies to carry on their worldly activities. Ramdas does not believe it. We can live a perfectly honest life in whatever situation we are placed, provided we intensely aspire to live up to our ideal of absolute honesty. We should never tell a lie whatever may be the consequence."

Devotee : "What is God ?"

Papa : "Many great saints have said that God is Satchidananda-parabrahma-vastu."

Devotee : "What is the relation between man and God ?"

Papa: "They are one. But, through ignorance, man feels he is separate from God."

Devotee: "But I am not satisfied with your answer to my question: "What is God?"

Papa: "You will be satisfied only when you experience God. Do sadhana, still the mind and realise that you are God. Once Sankaracharya was camping in a place with some of his disciples. In a room he was giving some lessons to them. One of them, who had gone out on some business, knocked at the door. Sankara asked, 'Who is that?' The disciple replied: 'I am here.' Then Sankara said, 'If that I is the individual I, give it up. If it is the universal I, keep it.' This was a most valuable instruction and the disciple immediately took it. He realised the Truth then and there."

January 10, 1956

506. 7-30 a.m. The previous day the Annual Number of 'Kalyan', the English devotee asked to tea famous and popular Hindi magazine, had come by post and ever since, Papa had been keeping it with him most of the time. This magazine contained stories from the puranas. After finishing his correspondence and breakfast in the morning, he was immersed in reading it. Unusually there were not many devotees present—only two were sitting in front of him.

The local tabla-player, who was also a devotee of Papa, entered the room, prostrated, sat near Papa and said, "That devotee of yours who has come from London should come to my house and have tea with us. Such a great devotee, he has come all the way from London to India! Where is London, where is Kanhangad and where is Bhavnagar! He must have extraordinary love for you. We are after all very ordinary devotees. I must take him home at least once. I want your permission for it."

Papa (*laughing*): "You have developed so much love for him! You may ask him. If he agrees you can take him."

Tabla-player: "I have already asked him. He has agreed. I shall come here in the evening with the car to take him. As I do not know English, I have asked my brother-in-law to take leave from his office today and he will be here this evening."

Papa: "Don't feed him with anything made in oil. Prepare things in ghee. He does not take chillies. In the ashram also he was not taking such things."

Tabla-player: "I will give him only fruits and tea."

Mataji: "You may give some biscuits also."

Papa : "That will be all right."

Tabla-player : "Will he stay here as long as you stay?"

Papa : "It is likely, as he is waiting for his ticket."

Tabla-player : "If so. I wish to take him to my house everyday for tea."

Papa (*laughing*) : "Do you love him so much?"

507. 8 a.m. It had become the custom for Batukbhai Pattani to come with his wife at that time. He would bring two flowers with him, place one at Papa's feet and another at Mataji's. He would spend a few minutes with Papa daily. When he came Papa would ask him *kaisa hai?* (How are you?) His answer invariably would be *chalta hai-dodta nahi hai* (walking, but not running).

Saints'
words are
upadesh

10 a.m. Bhajan was over. A few devotees and Papa were in the room. Papa was reading the morning post. There was a letter from Amal Bose of Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The letter said that he was happy to get Papa's letter and was treasuring it as a spiritual document. On reading that Papa smiled and said he would like to see the letter under reference. But that was not possible, as the files were in Anandashram.

Papa : "When people write such letters, Ramdas feels like looking into the old correspondence to see if he has written anything special."

S : "Not special from Papa's point of view. But all the importance lies in this : they get the letter at the right time and the contents sink deep in their hearts. Then they consider it to be of unusual importance."

A devotee : "Is it not that whatever a saint says is an *upadesh* to others?"

Papa : "Yes. Saint Tukaram has sung beautifully about this. He says that even an ordinary talk of a saint is full of *upadesh* (spiritual advice)."

508. Sri Sompura came in to say that Sri Shivjibhai had come. Instantly Shivjibhai himself was seen prostrating before Papa. Papa greeted him. Shivji raised his head and said, 'I remember you are the *chhota bachcha, lekin sherka bachcha*' (you are a small child but you are the cub of a lion). All had a good laugh. When Shivjibhai came last time in 1954, during their conversation Papa seemed to have spoken of himself as *chhota bachcha* (a small child), to which Shivji immediately replied, '*Chhota bachcha thik hai, lekin sherka bachcha hai*' (small child, all right, but a lion's cub).

Go to God,
our Mother

Shivji : "You have had a long tour round the world."

Papa : "Yes, we visited many places."

Shivji : "But the Ganges has come to our house."

Papa : "Some friends wished that after Ramdas's return from the tour, they should go round him once so that they would also get the benefit of having gone round the world."

Shivji : "That is what we are doing now. I heard from our friend that you had come here and I wanted to have your darshan."

Papa : "That is very nice. It is very kind of you. God is called Khuda. It means he who comes of his own accord. You have come of your own accord to give darshan. So you are God."

Sompura : "Yesterday Papa said that to come near its mother, the child need not be clean. If the child is dirty, the mother cleans it. What we have to do is only to become small children."

Shivji : "That is the right thing. We must become children and go to God, our Mother. If we know this, what more have we to attain?"

Papa : "When we become children and go to God, our Mother, we need not be tidy. She will lift us up, bathe us clean and take us into Her own being. To cleanse us is Her job. But we must not forget to go to Her. That is all."

Shivji : "When we accept Him as Mother, half the work is over. When we become children, the work is complete. But we are not prepared for either."

Papa : "Even if we are called by Her we do not go."

Shivji : "I was told you are to stay here for two months. Is it true? I have come here only for a few minutes. I shall come again to spend a longer time with you. I have now got the key : To attain Ram we must catch hold of Hanuman. To get Ramdas I have to catch hold of Sompura. It was he who guided me to you. It was his father who first showed me your book *In Quest of God*. I must see Mataji also."

Mataji came after her bath and Shivji got up and prostrated to her.

Shivji : "Don't you remember me?"

Mataji : "How can I forget the Divine Mother?"

Shivji : "I came to the ashram and you fed me with fine rotis."

Mataji : "I remember you came to the ashram but not about giving you rotis."

Shivji laughed and took his leave of Papa and Mataji.

Papa : "When Shivji came last time he gave Ramdas an embrace. He pressed him so hard that it gave him pain for days together. Ramdas remembered it this time and never got up from his seat. He was dreadfully afraid of it."

Sompura : "Whenever I am here for a few minutes, I note down whatever you say. You have been giving me some story or other which is very instructive."

Papa : "So you got good stories for four or five days."

509. 5 p.m. Pathak finished Papa's massage fifteen minutes earlier. Papa **Do not blame the times** then signed the outgoing letters, went out to the main hall and sat on the sofa. There were three devotees waiting for him. One of them was a young man, who, it seemed, had made it a point to meet Papa when he was alone, as far as possible, so that he could go on with his volley of questions without any interruption. The young devotee had been meeting Papa for the last two or three years during his visits to Bhavnagar.

The devotee : "Swamiji, I have been taking Ramnam as suggested by you. Sometimes I get so much joy that I feel like dancing."

Papa (*with a broad smile*) : "Yes, go on dancing."

Devotee : "But that joy does not last long. It fades away soon."

Papa : "Because the repetition of the mantra stops. If you keep up the repetition, you will have unending joy."

Devotee : "We are not able to keep up the repetition as we have so many other responsibilities of the household to shoulder. Perhaps in the olden days things were easy and one could do sadhana better in the household."

Papa : "Why do you think it was easy in the olden days and not now? Are there not great mahatmas these days? In Gujarat itself you had the householder saint, Narsi Mehta. So do not blame the times. We ourselves are responsible. It is necessary to have intense aspiration to realise God. Then sadhana can be done, anywhere and at any time. We do repetition of God's name for a few hours of the day and feel that we are great devotees. What are we? Prahlada, Narada and saints like them are the real bhaktas. You must have heard about Sri Ramakrishna. During the early days of his sadhana, it seems he was fully absorbed in the contemplation of the Divine Mother and he spent the whole day quite unconcerned with the surroundings and the world. When the evening bell rang at the Kali temple, he would be

reminded that the day had passed and night was approaching. At this he used to feel great pain and agony and cry out : 'O Mother, another day has passed, still You have not shown Yourself to me.' So intense was his aspiration to realise the Mother."

510. Devotee : "What about our worldly responsibilities ? We have
God looks many dependants. They have to be looked after. Should we shirk
after all our responsibilities ?"

Papa : "What is our responsibility ? Are people depending upon us ? No. It is foolish to think so. God looks after everybody and it is His responsibility.

"King Shivaji was once building a big fort. Thousands of men were engaged for the work. The construction was progressing at full speed. One day Shivaji went there and saw thousands of men at work. He thought : 'Such a large number of people are depending upon me for their livelihood.' He felt happy and proud. Shivaji was the disciple of Samarth Ramdas, a great saint of Maharashtra. The latter came to see his disciple. He soon discerned the pride that filled Shivaji's mind, and wanted to teach him a lesson. Seeing a very big rock nearby he asked Shivaji to get a few workmen and order them to break it to pieces. When some big pieces of the rock were broken off, they noticed a few holes inside the rock. In each hole there was water and a live frog. Samarth Ramdas now asked Shivaji, 'How are the frogs living here ? Are you responsible for feeding them ? Is it not God who provides for all ? Is it not then God who looks after thousands of these workers here ?' At this direct question, Shivaji felt greatly ashamed of his own littleness. He prostrated before the saint and asked for forgiveness.

"We take the responsibility of the family and so forth unnecessarily. We must know, it is God who runs the whole show. We are ourselves protected by Him. Then how can we think we are looking after others ? Ramana Maharshi has given a beautiful example. There is a train running. One of the passengers has a suitcase. He is worried about it. He feels it will be left behind if he does not carry it himself on his head. So he puts it on his head and sits in the train. He does not know that when he and the suitcase are both in the train, the suitcase will also be carried by the train. That is what we are also doing. God looks after us and everybody. Instead of firmly believing in this, we feel the responsibility of looking after our relations, and worry about them."

511. Devotee : "What about the various difficulties we have ?"
Difficulties,

only for Papa : "What difficulties ? When you entirely depend upon God,
our good what difficulties will you have ? You must have full faith that God
 does everything for the best. Even the difficulties, He gives us
only for our good. They say the devotees of Vishnu become very poor. The reason

is this. When a devotee worships Vishnu, He takes away all his material possessions. This is to enable the devotee to give up his 'I and mine' and completely surrender to Him. When his surrender is complete and he has realised his identity with God, God gives him everything in plenty. Now, though he possesses much more than he had before, he does not feel that he owns anything as his. He knows well that all these are given to him by God and that he is merely an instrument in His hands to carry out His will. There is no place for egoism."

512.

Devotee: "Is it better to chant the mantra mentally than aloud?"

God is

Anandaghana Papa: "It is left to each one's taste and temperament. Some get concentration by repeating mentally, while some others get it by repeating aloud. In the case of Ramdas he was repeating aloud, and by the very sound of the Name his mind was concentrated. The mind got immersed in the Name and became still. You have seen the snake-charmer playing on his flute. As soon as the serpent hears the sound of music, it stops running about, raises its hood and stands still. So does our mind, as soon as it is attracted by the sound of the Name."

Devotee: "As I have already told you, I am repeating the Gayatri mantra and also the Ram mantra. Sometimes I suspect that I am taking two mantras because of my doubt in the efficacy of either of them. What is your advice?"

Papa: "All mantras are equally powerful. Go on chanting them constantly. What you need is constant practice supported by dispassion for worldly things. Go on with your practice."

Devotee: "When I met you, two years back, I had love for the Name 'Govinda'. But you said Ramnam is sweet. Now, of course, I am taking Ramnam and find it sweet."

Papa: "Govindanam is sweet. Ramnam is also sweet. All Names are sweet. All are Names of the Supreme Being, who is sweetness itself. Whatever Name you take, it must taste sweet. Ramdas was given Ramnam by his Guru. So he was taking Ramnam. If he had been given Govindanam he would have taken it and enjoyed the same sweetness. All Names are equally sweet. The moment you take the Name it gives you sweetness, as is the case when you put a lozenge into your mouth. God is sweet. Oh! Our mouth waters when we talk about His name! He is Anandaghana (full of bliss)."

All were silent for a few minutes. Papa took the newspaper that was lying by his side, and started reading it.

XLVIII

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 10, 1956

513. 6-45 p.m. After supper Papa sat on the sofa. Mukund Rai who
Papa's was standing nearby, was about to prostrate before Papa. Looking
command at him intently, Papa, in his characteristic way, asked, 'What is the
of matter?' Mukund Rai simply said, 'No matter'. Papa would not
languages let it go at that. He questioned further, 'If there is no matter,
 all is spirit then, is it not?' Mukund Rai was nonplussed. He said,
"All spirit? I have not yet come to realize that." Papa laughed.

8 p.m. On the previous two days, bhajans were conducted in the shamiana put up for that purpose in front of the ashram. As the cold was a bit severe, Papa suffered from the cold sitting there. So Mataji and Champaben suggested that bhajan be held in the hall.

S. and Mataji were in the room. That was the time they generally talked about various things. S., while writing his notes, spoke to Mataji: "When Papa speaks in Hindi I am able to follow easily. But when others talk, I cannot follow very well."

Mataji: "Papa's talks in different languages are very clear and good. It is not so with me. Sometimes when I start talking I blabber and Papa does not understand. He would ask me what I am saying. I can't talk straight to the point. But Papa talks beautifully. His English is good, his Konkani is beautiful, and so his Hindi."

S: "One has to be very careful in talking to Papa. One should not be confused in his ideas. One must be clear and not waver. Subbaram finds it difficult to talk to Papa."

January 11, 1956

514. 10 a.m. Bhajan was just over. In Papa's room Gunvantrai Desai
God resides and some other devotees were seated with him. All of them were
in the silent for a long time. Desai broke the silence asking: "Papa,
devotee's have you said everything that you have to say or have you yet
heart anything more to say or write?"

Papa : "Ramdas has said everything he has to say. But he says the same thing again and again in different ways. Some who have not heard him ask questions and he answers ; and those who have heard him, want to hear him again and again. Some like it to be hammered repeatedly. It is a joy to hear about God again and again. To sing or hear of Him or do bhajan is a great pleasure. Once when Ramdas was in Katrasgarh, he met a sannyasi who was coming for the bhajan there. He lived in a cave in a jungle. During bhajan one devotee who sang God's name was going into ecstasies, and tears flowed from his eyes. He was immersed in the Name and was supremely blissful. Looking at him, the swami said : 'Look at this man. He is so happy in doing bhajan and tears of joy flow from his eyes. He is in ecstasy. I have renounced worldly things and I live in a cave. I speak of jnana and follow that path. But it has no real joy and sweetness. Why should I resort to the caves ?' The Lord says that He is not in the caves or jungle, but He resides in the heart of the devotee who sings His name !"

Mukutbhai : "In solitude we get vairagya, don't we ?"

Papa : "Only after getting vairagya we can think of living in solitude."

Mukutbhai : "Will you kindly tell us again the story of Narada and the devotee who prayed for a child ?"

Papa : "Ramdas told you once."

Mukutbhai : "Yes. But none of these people has heard it."

Papa : "Then Ramdas will tell you."

515. Papa narrated the story. As soon as he finished it, Sai Sattar
God fulfils Shah told the following story : "A devotee had the vision of God as
saints' light when he was meditating under a tree. Thereafter he used to go
blessings to the place everyday and tell God what he wanted to say. In his
 village there was a childless couple. They asked the devotee to
 pray to God to bless them with children. The devotee went to the place as usual and
 prayed that the couple might be blessed with children. God replied that the couple
 were not destined to have children in that birth and therefore He could not do
 anything about it. The devotee came back and told them so. A few days later a
 fakir was passing through the village saying that he would give blessings for a child
 if anybody gave him a roti. The wife heard this. Women have generally more faith,
 whereas men are doubting Thomases. The woman wished to feed the fakir and so
 requested her husband to call the fakir to their home for meals. The husband
 wondered what a fakir could do, when God Himself could not do anything. However
 he was persuaded to call the fakir. He was asked to stand near the fakir and fan him
 while his wife started preparing rotis. When one roti was baked on one side she

to Ramdas and says, 'So and so wants blessings from you for the cure of his illness'. Ramdas then asks him what fee he receives for representing his case to Ramdas. Ramdas does not at all like any representation through a party."

Papa then asked Anantrai to sit for a while, and went for a wash and change.

517.
Love is everything A very old man trotted in with great difficulty. He sat before Papa, placed his head at his feet and asked Papa to place his hands on his head and bless him. Papa, with great love, placed both his hands on his head. He raised his head and said, "I did not know that you were here. I searched for you everywhere and finally came here. When I came to the gate and asked if I could get in, one said I should not and another said I could. Actually I need not ask permission to get in where a saint is, and I do not go where a saint is not."

Papa: "It is well you came."

Old man: "I am a poor man. This is all I can offer you."

So saying he took out one pice and handing it over to Papa, added: "Rich people give you many rupees. But a poor man like me can only give this."

Papa: "That is enough and more. You are giving it with all love and devotion. What more is required? Love is everything."

Sai Sattar Shah who had gone out came in and took his seat. After a while the old man again placed his head at Papa's feet and requested him to pat him on the back with both hands. Papa did so. The old man now got up and going near S. who was sitting a few feet away, was about to touch his feet. Immediately, S. touched the old man's feet. The latter resented this and asked: "Are you not the chela of Swamiji?"

S: "Yes."

Old man: "Then you must put both your hands on my back and bless me."

S: "Guruji who is to bless you, has already done it."

Old man: "You are his chela and you must also bless me."

This created a scene in the room. Papa then asked S. to place his hands over the old man. When this was done, he was happy and said: "That is the way. I must have blessings from the Guruji as well as the chela."

The old man then left the room. Then one devotee who was sitting by Papa's side, also prostrated at Papa's feet requesting him to pat him on the back. Others

followed suit and Papa blessed them all by patting them on the back. After they had left, Sai Sattar Shah said: "They are Pathans and their ways are different. They are not satisfied by our merely bowing before them when they prostrate. They want to be patted on the back."

518. 1-30 p.m. A young man from South India came with a request for some financial help and handed over a letter to Papa. After reading the letter, Papa gave him ten rupees. He asked for more to cover his return journey expenses. He went on repeating his request.

God helps the contented

Papa: "You must be satisfied with whatever you are given. When there is contentment, God brings you further help. The giver is God Himself. We are only instruments. If you are discontented with what He gives, you do not deserve more. Your discontent proves to be an obstacle between you and the help that He gives. So be satisfied with this now. You can go to other friends who can help you."

The postman brought a few letters. Papa received them and got busy with them. One by one the friends who were sitting in the room left. Papa called Mataji to sit near him, and read out some letters to her. One of the letters contained a beautiful silk handkerchief sent by a French lady as a New Year gift. Papa showed it to Mataji who said, "It is fine. It may be sent to Ramkishor when writing to him next," and continued: "Papa, the young man who came to you for some help and to whom you paid ten rupees, came to me with the same request. Champaben Kamdar was then talking to me. She arranged to get a ticket for him and he was very happy."

Papa: "It was well done. Ramdas paid him ten rupees and gave him a short lecture that he should be content with what was given to him."

519. 5 p.m. Papa's massage was over early. He signed the outgoing letters and gave them to S. He then went to the hall where some devotees were waiting. After a few strolls across the hall, Papa sat on the sofa, Maganlal Contractor and Gunvantrai Desai sat in front of him.

Mysterious is grace

Papa: "Ramdas does not feel like walking any more."

S: "Does Papa feel tired?"

Papa (*thinking a moment*): "Tired? No, he cannot say he is tired. But..."

S: "He feels like sitting down."

Papa: "Yes, that is it."

All were silent for a while. Papa broke the silence saying: "There is nothing unnatural if the body is ill. But, of course, they say the natural condition of the body

is a state of perfect health without any illness. Mind is also like that. With some persons the mind is healthy while with some others it is diseased. But, the person whose mind is dead—who has experienced that which is beyond the mind—has no concern whether the body is ill or well. It makes no difference to him."

S : "In their case, is there no wish to keep the body in a fit condition?"

Papa : "They are in the grip of a higher power. They cannot explain how it is. The fact is that they are mysteriously guided and prompted to do things."

Papa was in a thoughtful mood for some time. All were silent. Then Papa himself began : "Today Sai Sattar Shah said in his talk that even saints are partial or have favourites. He says that saints love some persons more than some others ; they give what they have to some, not to all. If a saint takes a liking for somebody, he may give away all his spiritual wealth to him whether that person deserves it or not. Even if he is not fit for it, the saint can first make him fit and then give him. Saints are all-powerful. They can do anything. So many deserving persons may live with a saint for years together, doing sadhana without deriving any benefit, whereas he may spiritually elevate another who may be most unprepared and undeserving. That is real grace. We do not know when it comes and under what conditions. It is a mystery. When it comes suddenly to an undeserving man, we try to find out so many reasons for it. We say he must have done a lot of intense sadhana in his previous birth and so he got grace in this birth. But if you ask Ramdas about himself, he would say that he never deserved it. He does not think he had attained a lot of punya or done sadhana and such like in his previous life. If there was anybody undeserving, it was Ramdas. Ramdas never did any sadhana for it. If at all he did any, he was fully conscious that it was God who made him do sadhana. By His grace He prepares us and then we attain Him. In this connection Sri Ramakrishna gives a beautiful example in the form of a story : There was a king who had a very faithful servant. The servant was poor, just making both ends meet on what he got as monthly salary. He had a great desire that the king should visit his abode. As the intensity of the desire grew in him, one day he boldly requested the king to be kind enough to pay a visit to his hut. Considering the loyalty and love of the servant, the king agreed and fixed a day for the visit. Immediately, the king called some of his other servants and ordered them to go to that servant's house, make it clean, whitewash it, decorate it inside and out and also furnish it with sofa, carpets and other materials befitting a royal visit. All this was done before the appointed time, and the king visited. The servant was extremely pleased.

"So also, God purifies us by making us do sadhana and so on, and when we have become pure He takes His seat in our heart. As an Upanishadic saying goes : 'God reveals Himself in the heart of the person whom He chooses'. On what condition He chooses, we do not know. But when He chooses to come, He prepares the person thoroughly well and then He comes."

Maganlal Contractor : "Then what have we got to do ?"

Papa : "Ah, that is the problem. We have to wait. But how long? Even if we wait for ages He may not choose to reveal Himself in us. There are many who have been doing sadhana for years but have gained no real spiritual experience. Ramdas never thought God would take him to such a state. He was a fakir, wandering from place to place. In those days he never liked to be honoured more than others. Whenever he went to meet friends they would give him a chair to sit. But Ramdas would never sit on the chair. He would sit on the floor along with others. He was a humble servant. If people prostrated before him, he also would prostrate before them exactly the same way they did. If they did a dandavat namaskar, he also would do likewise. Now he is not doing it physically, but he does mentally. He is now made to sit on sofas and high pedestals and people worship him. So the servant has become the master! Is it actually so? Perhaps it is in a different way. Ramdas looked upon God from two viewpoints— as a servant to the master, and as a child to the mother. So now Ramdas is in the position of a child. You know the mother places the child on a higher seat and looks at it intently and enjoys every word the child utters ; of course all the words the child utters are only taught by the mother herself. So the mother has seated this child on a higher level and enjoys his talks. Further, God says, 'If you worship My servant, I am pleased, because I am My own servant.' This is the way how God talks. This language we cannot understand. As Jesus has it 'I and My Father are one. He who sees the Son sees the Father.' The servant and the Master are one, the Son and the Father are one."

520. **Maganlal Contractor :** "Coming to our point, are we not to do any
Seek saints' company sadhana ?"

Papa : "What sadhana can we do ? We must court the company of saints. Our long contact with them should gradually transform us—not by our conscious effort. By long association with a saint, those around him slowly imbibe his qualities. They say, the trees that grow near a sandal tree in the forest, turn into sandal trees in course of time. But you must not forget that all trees do not become sandal ; hollow ones cannot become sandal. Association with the saints is a wonderful help. But you must never be like bamboos, all hollow inside."

521. **Just then Mataji was seen going with a few small paper packets in her hand.. Papa asked her what they were. She replied they were some eatables for the children. She smiled and walked away in order to distribute them to the children. Papa also gave a broad smile and turning to the devotees sitting before him, said : "Mataji is in her element when she has something to give. In the ashram there, she is always**

giving and giving. But here she has not much scope. Still she manages to do something here also. You must see her face when she is giving. It is lit up and bright. She enjoys giving. She knows the heart is intended to feel for others, and the hands to give to others. We are misusing these by making the heart feel for ourselves only and the hands to render service to ourselves only. Those who have self-pity are the meanest and most narrow-minded people. They are weak. We must have pity for others. That is real strength. We must be strong and bold. Swami Vivekananda never liked anybody belittling or pitying himself. He would tell him, 'Why do you belittle yourself? The great God is seated in your heart. How can you then say that you are a sinner and so on?' Be bold and daring, but never be foolhardy or rash. There is a saying, 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' We should not be like that. We must be 'heroes in the strife and never be like dumb driven cattle'."

January 12, 1956

522. 9-30 a.m. Bhajan was over. A few devotees were talking with
Diverse Papa. A lady devotee who came from Bhopal for Papa's darshan
doubts was in the group and was asking questions.
set at rest

Devotee : "What is Truth?"

Papa : "The only One."

Devotee : "All the rest must be unreal."

Papa : "According to mayavadins the whole creation is unreal, non-existent. They say everything is like a dream. But according to lilavadins the whole creation is the expression of God. God Himself has become all these forms. God's nature is to manifest Himself as various forms and play His lila."

Devotee : "Then man is not responsible for his actions, sinful or otherwise."

Papa : "God is the doer of all actions and man is only an instrument."

Devotee : "Then why are we asked to do good actions?"

Papa : "That is to go beyond sin and merit. Having gone beyond the pairs of opposites—good and bad, vice and virtue, and so forth saints blissfully play the game. They have no hatred towards anybody as they have no sense of duality. Duality is the cause of hatred, dislike and so on. Their life is pure. In such a life pure bliss alone is. Without knowing this, people run after worldly pleasures and consequently suffer."

Devotee : "If Atman is One, why should there be many forms?"

Papa : "Clay is one and out of it many pots are made. So also the original Being is One and from Him all these forms have come."

Devotee : "Is darshan of the Lord possible?"

Papa : "It is possible for one who aspires after it."

Devotee : "Can you say that is also lila?"

Papa : "Who is giving darshan to whom? He Himself is everything. One who follows the path of lila is always happy. But mayavadins, who hold the view that the world is non-existent, do not get the real joy of life."

Devotee : "If all this is lila, how can you account for the cheating and many other horrible things that men do?"

Papa : "All these must be there in the lila. In a drama you see a king, a robber and many other characters. You do not ask why a robber should be there. You know that without a robber's part the drama will be incomplete. So all parts are necessary."

Devotee : "They say, in Kaliyuga there will be many evils."

Papa : "Those who do sadhana will say that this is Satyayuga. Kaliyuga, Satyayuga and all such things are *manokalpita* (mind-made)."

Devotee : "Then the fact that God is in our heart must also be *manokalpita*."

Papa : "He who is in us and everywhere about us is the only Reality. It is by His power alone that all things happen."

Devotee : "Some devotees say that they have visions of light and so on. What are such visions?"

Papa : "When the mind is pure, one has visions of light and so on. In the pure mind, light is reflected. In fact one sees only one's own light."

Devotee : "If I see light in you, is it my light or your light?"

Papa : "It is your own light. As your mind is pure, you see light here."

Devotee : "I see light in some and not in others."

Papa : "In that case it must be his (Ramdas's) light. But the point is that that light is not seen by all. That means you also need some purity to see that light in him."

Devotee : "Has one got to go beyond all visions of light, and so on?"

Papa : "By seeing light you should not think that you have attained everything. You have, in fact, to go much farther. You have yet to get the experience of God in His fullness. Experience of light is only a ray."

Devotee : "Can you talk to God as you talk to us ?"

Papa : "Yes. In the saguna aspect, God acts and talks to us as we do among ourselves."

Devotee : "Is the path very difficult ?"

Papa : "Those who have ananya bhakti (one-pointed devotion) find the path easy. They attain God soon."

Devotee : "But one encounters many difficulties."

Papa : "Difficulties are good. In trying to overcome difficulties, we remember Him evermore. Difficulties and obstacles are incentives to progress. We get great strength, overcoming them. By such strength we get to our goal soon. We must be prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of God."

Devotee : "Should we be prepared to give our life also to God ?"

Papa : "Yes. We must be prepared to give Him our life. But who is prepared to do so ?"

Devotee : "A devotee in Ahmedabad went to a temple and took his head off. Can you say, by doing so he got the darshan of God ?"

Papa : "He must have got the darshan. God must have taken him to Himself."

Devotee : "I have a friend. He says that he thinks of God with love. Whenever he meets with obstacles, he overcomes them, but they keep coming. How is he then to have faith in God ?"

Papa : "By going on removing obstacles, gradually he will get faith. In due course, God's grace will come to him. One must not get dispirited by one or two obstacles. God is for the strong and not for cowards. Cowards are afraid and cannot go near God. You must have firm determination that without attaining Him you will not turn back."

Devotee : "When we are struggling to realise God, He also must be earnestly wishing to take us to Him."

Papa : "He is more anxious than we are. A mother is really more anxious about her child. So is God."

523. This dialogue was interrupted by the entry of Hiralal Pandya, a Mastram Pandya and Jivanlal Bhatt. The former two were Upendra Bhatt's uncles and the latter, his father. Upendra Bhatt had the privilege of having Papa at his house whenever he visited Rajkot. They garlanded Papa with beautiful rose garlands. Greeting them Papa said : "Ramdas has been thinking of you all very often. Now you trimurtis have come."

Mastram : "We were engaged in the opening of the sanatorium and could not come earlier."

Jivanlal : "Upendra's mother is unwell. So I had to go to Rajkot."

Papa : "Ramdas knew about it."

The talk then turned to world tour. They asked Papa if the tour reports had been published. Papa took the book *World is God* from the table near him and handed it over to Hiralal saying : "This is the book."

Jivanlal : "Yes. We read the circular letters written by S. during the tour. This book must be more comprehensive."

Papa took the book from Hiralal's hand, saying : "Do you know Ramdas went to Europe?" He then opened it and started reading from the Introduction : "God has made Ramdas into a ripe fruit on His huge tree of manifest life for presentation to the world as a gift. Under His guidance, care and grace, Ramdas's life grew, budded, bloomed and fruited until at last it became ripe, sweet and fragrant. Surely all the glory for the production of such a fruit is His—Ramdas's beloved Master's!"

Papa closed the book, turned his glance from the book to the trimurtis, and his face brightened with his usual broad smile. The listeners seemed to have enjoyed what Papa read out to them.

Hiralal : "It is good Bhavnagar is able to enjoy the sweet and fragrant fruit for two months. Thanks to Gunvantbhai. You are so sweet and specially kind to us!"

Papa : "It is like dipping a piece of sugarcandy in syrup. Ramdas is like a ripe fruit. As he has said, it was all done by Him. He does everything. We have only to be His children. That is a difficult job indeed."

Jivanlal : "Did you maintain good health all through the tour?"

Papa : "Yes. All of us maintained good health. God arranged everything for us, in all places, very comfortably and perfectly. A fakir is free from all anxieties. God looks after him."

524.
**The effect
of saint's
presence**

Just then a sannyasi came in followed by two men dressed in white. He gave a guava fruit to Papa and prostrated at his feet. Papa also touched his feet and asked him to sit on a chair. The swami sat there and the other two on the floor.

Papa: "You have been so gracious to come and give your darshan, Maharaj! Where do you come from?"

Swamiji: "I come from the Punjab, and belong to the Udasi Panth (of the Sikhs)."

Papa: "Oh, when Ramdas was in the Punjab he went to Amritsar and to the Golden Gurudwara there. There he met Mahatma Bhai Vir Singh. God's name is everything. It is sweet, sweet like nectar. Of course, by the grace of saints alone we take God's name and taste its sweetness. Grace is in the beginning, in the middle and in the end also. See, you have been gracious enough to come here."

Swamiji: "It was by your grace that I could come here. This devotee has some trouble in his left eye. He wants your blessings for relief."

Papa: "When he has your blessings—a mahatma's—what more does he require? Let him repeat Ramnam. Ramnam must cure all diseases. Let him take it constantly. He will be all right. Ramnam is all-powerful. But when we take it in the company of saints, we find its real taste. We must have saints' blessings."

A devotee: "What is a saint's influence on a seeker?"

Papa: "The very presence of saints throws light on the sadhaka. He feels a strange peace and joy. When you sit in the sun, you automatically get light and heat. So also when devotees sit in front of a saint, they find their minds are still and also enjoy peace. This happens without any effort on their part."

XLIX

Ramdas-ashram, January 14, 1956

525. 9-15 a.m. Bhajan was going on. S. and Mataji were in Papa's
Guru can room.
take over
prarabdha Mataji: "Baba says he is sure that by the treatment he is giving
 you, you will be all right. He has diagnosed your case well and is
confident."

S: "Today I found great relief after the morning treatment."

Mataji: "Why is it that all others who meet Papa and get his blessings get well, whereas those in the ashram get sick?"

S. could not give a reply. He said: "This you alone can answer."

Mataji: "I think it is because Papa takes upon himself the diseases of others and we in the ashram share it. We do not want him to suffer alone. Not that we have to ask for it specifically. But the very fact that we wish him to remain in good health shows that we are prepared to partake of his physical sufferings. I have seen clear cases when Papa took some diseases upon himself. Some years ago I noticed a white patch on Papa's body and it looked like leucoderma. I was wondering how Papa could get it all of a sudden. I wished to help him get rid of it by proper treatment. After some months when we were in Bangalore, a devotee came to Papa and told his story. He was so happy that by Papa's blessings he was cured of his leucoderma. When he had the trouble and had a lot of patches on his body, he wrote a letter to Papa who sent him blessings for the cure. Immediately, his cure started and in a few months he was all right. Then I could infer that Papa had taken over the disease of this devotee."

S: "When did that disappear from Papa's body?"

Mataji: "It disappeared in a few months. In the early days, when I heard the same about Sri Ramakrishna, I doubted whether the guru could really take on the prarabdha of his disciples. Papa showed me then clearly that it was possible."

"The guru can take the prarabdha from anybody and he can bear it easily. That which is like a mountain is to him only a mist. Have you heard the story of a guru being affected by Sani (Saturn)?"

S: "No. Do tell me please."

526. Mataji: "Once a saint was to be affected by Sani. Sani came to the
Saturn's saint and told him that the saint was going to be under his influence
influence at least for a short while. Ordinary persons would be under the
on a saint influence of Sani for years together. But with the saint, it had to
 be at least for a few minutes. The saint agreed.

"The saint was going alone on a yatra. On the way some devotees gave him a watermelon which he put in his bag. It was a broken melon and when the saint was taking it in the bag, water—red in colour—was leaking through it. Meanwhile the Yuvaraja of that country who had gone for hunting was missing, and the king with his courtiers was out searching for him. The king saw this saint (he did not know that he was a saint) carrying a bag from which blood (the watermelon juice) was dripping. He immediately got down from his horse, snatched the bag from the saint and looked into it. In his eyes the melon appeared to be his son's head. The saint was arrested and was about to be executed. The saint calmly prayed for a few minutes' time before the order was carried out and it was granted. Suddenly the Yuvaraja turned up. Surprised, the king examined the bag again and saw clearly that it was but a melon. In his embarrassment the king asked the saint what it was all about. Then he explained that it was the result of a few minutes' evil influence of Sani upon him!

"That is what happens with saints. They take on any suffering and bear it easily. What others have to bear for years is worked out by them in a few minutes."

527. 10 a.m. Some devotees were sitting before Papa. Papa remarked :
Meeting with "Ramdas is a little child. But Mataji says Ramdas is obstinate
Sri Ma sometimes. That is a fact. When Ramdas met Ma Anandamayi
Anandamayi some years back, we talked together for some time. She addressed
 Ramdas as 'Pitaji'. Ramdas objected to it and said he was only a
child and she was his mother. She said, 'No'. Then Ramdas told her that he was actually a child, because he had no teeth, and that she was his mother because she had teeth! Ma Anandamayi laughed and had nothing more to say.

"For Ramdas the devotees of U.P. started building an ashram in Goghar Parvat near Jhansi. God did not permit it to proceed. Then others tried to build one for him at Limbdi. That also did not come up. Then he had one started in Kasaragod. That was also taken away. The present ashram stands."

528. **Dialogue at the Palace** Although indifferent health had made Papa resolve to have his lunch only at the ashram for some length of time, he accepted the invitation to lunch at the palace with the Maharaja and family since the Yuvaraja would shortly be leaving Bhavnagar. At 10-45 a.m. when Papa reached the palace along with Mataji, Sai Sattar Shah and a few others, a dozen persons were at the portico to receive the party. The Maharaja himself came out and led the party to the spacious hall where he performed pooja to Papa in accordance with vedic rites. He and the Yuvaraja garlanded Papa. The Maharani garlanded Mataji and Papa too. The Maharaja expressed his great joy in having Papa again for lunch as also Sai Sattar Shah who with his fine voice could entertain devotees with devotional songs.

Papa : "It is very gracious of Sai Sattar Shah to come here every time when Ramdas is here. Saints are so kind and gracious."

Sai Sattar Shah with folded hands bowed to Papa at his remarks saying that it was due to Papa's love and grace he was able to come.

Maharaja : "I cannot understand this paradox. Swamiji says it is by Sattar Shah's grace and Sattar Shah says it is by Swamiji's grace."

Papa : "Ramdas is only a child, and saints, as forms of his Divine Mother, take delight in coming and seeing him. Ramdas coming to Bhavnagar is like this. You know where there is honey, all flies rush in. People here are like honey and Ramdas is a fly that has come to drink honey. It flies wherever honey is."

Maharaja : "I am so happy you have such love for the people of Bhavnagar. What you said just now shows clearly how much love you have for us."

Papa : "Ramdas can definitely say that all the people of Bhavnagar enjoy satsang and bhajan. Ramdas has not seen so many congregating anywhere else in India or abroad. People here are full of love and devotion."

Maharaja : "Most of them follow the bhakti marga. Bhakti marga is easy and can be practised by all without danger or complication."

The talk then turned on the few saints whom the Maharaja had occasion to serve, and the way some of them lived. He said he was very much impressed by some of them though he could not say what stage of realisation they had reached. He said, "Swamiji, you should not think I am trying to judge how far one has reached

just as men judge the quality of horses by riding them. This is a common question. Many people ask who among the South Indian saints is great—Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi or Swami Ramdas ? I cannot answer them. As far as I am concerned, all are one."

Papa : "Ramdas is asked the same type of question. He is asked which country in the world he likes most. Ramdas's answer is that he likes all countries alike. There is no preference for any one particular country."

The Maharaja then expressed his long-cherished desire to visit Anandashram but so far the time for it had not come as Ram had not willed it.

Papa : "If you make the sankalpa, God fulfils it. Sankalpa has to be made. There is a saying of a Maharashtrian saint : 'Satya sankalpacha puranakari Bhagavan'. When a satya sankalpa is made, God surely fulfils it. But everything happens by His will alone ; even the sankalpa we make is possible only when He wills that we should do so. Nothing is really in our hands."

Papa was sitting on the sofa. But his legs were resting on the cold floor. The Maharaja ordered a foot-rest and also a blanket (made in the form of a coat) to be brought to cover Papa's legs. The conversation continued for some time more on various subjects—his goshala and his palace in an island at which he wished Papa should stay with him for a few days.

When after lunch the party was about to leave, the Maharani said that one of her daughters lying ill upstairs was coming down for darshan of Papa and Mataji. But someone said she could not, being too weak. Papa said she could come to the ashram for darshan when she got better and blessed her ; Mataji however went up to see the girl.

The Maharaja narrated to Papa the miraculous cure of the skin trouble of Col. Ajit Singh.

Papa : "Thousands of such things have happened. Many ask Ramdas to place his hands over them and after some days they say they are perfectly all right."

Maharaja : "When you touch them you might be wishing them well."

Papa : "They ask him to place his hands over them and he just does it. Ram does the trick."

Maharaja : "For us Ram and Ramdas are not different."

Papa : "George knows one such instance. While in England a teacher used to come to us. He was having some stomach trouble with severe pain. On the last

day of our stay he was taken to hospital. The doctors there warned him that he might have to be operated within a fortnight. On our way back from the North of England we had to pass through Nottingham where the teacher was in hospital. We went to see him. The nurse said that he was an extraordinary patient as, with all the pain he had, he was calm and serene. We met him; Mataji asked Ramdas to pass his hands over the stomach of the patient. We learnt later that when the doctors examined him again they found there was no need to perform an operation, for the trouble had disappeared. It was a great miracle."

Maharaja : "More than the doctor's medicines I value your blessings."

Papa : "Mataji also does a lot of miracles. She is not what she looks. If you ask her, she says, 'Go to Papa'. But she can do wonders. Her heart aches when she hears somebody is suffering. See now, your daughter is ill, she has run up. She cannot remain quiet without doing something to relieve suffering."

Mataji came back, all got up and started. The Maharaja addressing Mataji said, "Mataji, Ranisaheb is also ill and you have to do something for her too."

Mataji : "Papa has said that she will be all right. So there need be no worry about it."

The Maharaja was satisfied. Papa patted the Maharaja's second son saying, "He will be all right."

January 17, 1956

529. 10 a.m. Papa and a few devotees were in the room after the morning bhajan. Devotees in the bhajan-hall were leaving slowly and yet there was a lot of noise there, mostly that of the children who fought among themselves daily for the flower garlands. Two boys came inside Papa's room and Mataji gave away the flowers that were there. They ran away, and all the noise stopped.

Guru kripa flows to the humble

That was the usual time for Sompura's daily visit to Papa. He came, prostrated before Papa and sat near him.

Sompura : "When I was here yesterday you talked of the intensity of aspiration one should have in approaching God. You said one should travel to God as if by plane or rocket. Finally you added that this is possible only by guru kripa. How does guru kripa come to us ?"

Papa : "You have already got it. It is pouring on everybody in showers. You do not recognise it or you are not conscious of it. We must feel the kripa. That is all that is necessary. We, on the other hand, feel we can do anything by our own

effort. We are so egoistic. For such a person guru kripa is far away. We must be humble and self-effacing. When we realise that we are nothing and He is everything, we get the real experience. Our ego must go. There is a beautiful song by Kabirdas which means : 'The fish though living in water, feels thirsty'. So are we. Guru kripa is pouring on us incessantly, but we still feel miserable. If you watch carefully you will see that the fish in the water cannot drink water if it swims straight. It has to slant to one side a little to drink water. So also if we keep our head erect without bending it in humility, we neither experience nor feel grace."

530.

Humility— All were silent for a while. Papa was looking down, his head bent. More devotees came in and sat in the room quietly. The room was **distinguishing** full. Suddenly raising his head and looking at the devotees in front **mark of saints** of him with a broad smile, Papa asked them : "What is the greatest trait in a saint which you can notice in his actions ?"

One devotee : "I find that saints maintain their peace and joy always."

Another : "He talks and does everything blissfully."

Papa : "Have you seen this in all saints ?"

Devotee : "No."

Papa : "Then your definition is wrong. It can be true only if it is applicable to all saints. If you find it in Ramdas and not in others, it cannot be general."

Sompura : "All saints are not alike. Some are in ecstasy and do not talk at all. Another like you is a child of God. The quality of a child is absolute joy and freedom from all responsibility. That is seen very clearly in you. Whenever I come and see you here I see a blissful child. I know another saint who is very grave and reserved. If you ask us about the common trait, we cannot say—you have to tell us, please."

Papa : "Saints are humble. They are nirabhiman (without pride). Even if a saint shows abhiman, there is nirabhiman in it like a child that shows abhiman. Whether a saint is blissful and childlike or grave and reserved, he is ever free from abhiman. There are three types of saints—unmath, pisacha and bala. Those of the first category do not care even for their body. Those of the second category move about unconcerned and do so many things which might even frighten people. Those of the last category are childlike. They play about like children. All the three are equally great. We cannot say one is greater than the other."

"When we go to a saint we feel we should be in his presence for a long time because he radiates peace and joy. He has no ill-will towards anyone. A saint may belong to any one of the three categories or it is also possible one may have all these three qualities in him."

Sompura : "For a saint it does not matter where he lives. Many saints live in Rishikesh. Many live in other places. But they are all one. They have wireless communication among themselves."

Papa : "If one knows that one is everything, then with whom is he to communicate by wireless ? When you realise that you and Ramdas are one why should you have any wireless communication with Ramdas ? *(After a pause)* It may be a sort of lila. They may have communication though inwardly they are sure they all are one."

January 19, 1956

531. 2 p.m. After his siesta, Papa had some fruits and was in the room.
Realisation S. was near him attending to some work. The young lawyer-devotee,
sudden, who was always regular in attending Papa's talks and who liked to
process be alone with Papa, came in. He prostrated and sat down before
gradual Papa. Papa gazing at him intently, asked : "What is the matter ?
How are you ?"

Devotee : "All right, Papa. I wanted to talk to Papa about some of my experiences."

Papa : "Yes, come on, what is it ?"

Devotee : "I have been doing sadhana for some years now, and more intensely this one year. I have been feeling the prana rising up to the eyebrow and not beyond."

Papa : "It does not matter what these experiences are. As a result of these, how is your mind ? Is it still ? Are you free from kama, krodha and so on ? Are you getting purer everyday ?"

The devotee kept silent. A little later he said : "Yes, I am getting free from all these."

Papa : "Are you able to observe brahmacharya ?"

Devotee : "Yes, I am observing brahmacharya. But I am not getting that real joy."

Papa : "Oh, that is it. When you said about this to Ramdas, he was wondering. Really, if one has become free from lust, anger and so on, one will be so happy that one's whole physical frame will be filled with ananda. When you do not have this joy, your experience cannot be real."

Devotee : "Sometimes I feel I am not the body."

Papa : "How often do you have this ? Do you have it now ?"

Devotee : "I used to have it once in a way. Now I do not have it. When I feel I am not the body, and I am walking . . ."

Papa : "How can you say that you are walking ? Say that the body is walking."

Devotee : "Yes. When the body is walking I feel I am still and quiet."

Papa : "That experience must be permanent. There is a time when you have no consciousness of the body or the outer world. You have the experience of your real Self which is beyond the body, mind and senses. After getting that experience when you become conscious of the outer world you come to know that you are the whole universe and also that which is beyond the universe."

Devotee : "I do not forget the body or the world."

Papa : "Forgetting the world and the body may be only for a short time. After you have that experience and when you come to world-consciousness, your experience of the Self still remains with you. You live and move in the world knowing full well that you are the whole universe and beyond."

Devotee : "I feel sometimes that the whole external world is within me."

Papa : "It should not be a mere feeling. It must be an experience. There is always a danger that one thinks he has high experiences when really it is not so. He gives up sadhana and loses what he has gained. One must ceaselessly persevere till one reaches the goal which is nothing short of Self-realisation."

Devotee : "Is realisation a sudden or gradual experience ?"

Papa : "Realisation is in fact a sudden experience. But the preparation for it is gradual involving a steady and ceaseless practice."

532. **A long-time devotee** Sri C. Lakshminarasimhaiah was an old devotee of Papa. He had retired from service as a teacher in the then Mysore Government and he stayed with his family in Mysore. The previous time when he came to the ashram for the Silver Jubilee Celebration he had expressed his desire for intense sadhana. Papa had then advised him not to run away

from household, but to resort to solitude in some temple or other at nights. After returning to Mysore he was for some time going to a cave in the Chamundeswari Hill. Papa received a letter from him stating that he had to give up the cave as it was a haunt of thieves and the policemen were after them and that he was spending the nights then in a tomb in the burial ground. He had expressed his intense aspiration to continue his solitary life and spiritual practices till he attained his goal of universal vision. Papa was happy to read the letter. He translated it to Mataji and remarked : "So far, in the cave he had the company of thieves, bats and so forth. Now he has the company of the dead. Perhaps the company of the dead is many times better than that of the living. The living are full of deceit. There is no such fear from the dead. Let him carry on the sadhana."

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Ramdas-ashram, January 19, 1956

533. **Should Papa visit the lady's house ?** About 10 in the morning a lady came to see Papa. As soon as she sat in front of Papa, she took out a few books and from one of them showed Papa's picture printed in it. Papa who glanced through the book which was in Gujarati saw in it many more pictures of saints like Ramana Maharshi, Jalaramji and others. She showed another book where there was the picture of her daughter who, she said, was a good singer of bhajans and was then in Bombay. After conversing with Papa for some time she requested Papa to pay a visit to her house. Papa said he would do so but told her that he could not say exactly when he would be able to visit her. She insisted it should be that day itself. Papa then agreed to visit her house in the evening when he went out for a drive. Mataji was in the bathroom and did not hear that conversation between Papa and the lady. Mukutbhai and Shukla were near Papa. Shukla, the secretary of the ashram, did not seem to be happy when Papa agreed to the visit.

The lady prostrated before Papa and went out and waited to speak also to Mataji who was then taking her bath. After waiting for a while she left without meeting Mataji.

By then Mukutbhai and others were about to leave. Mukutbhai called S. and told him that the lady whose house Papa had agreed to visit was a notorious character. He heard it from the chowkidar of the ashram that her daughter had run away with somebody and the woman herself had a bad character and caused the death of a sadhu. Therefore he said it was not advisable for Papa to visit her house. S. told him that it would be better if he himself apprised Papa of it. But Mukutbhai was in a hurry. So S. agreed to see that the visit was at least postponed until Papa was fully informed.

In the afternoon when Papa was having tea, Papa told Mukutbhai that he had to go to that woman's house as promised. S. then hinted that Mukutbhai had something to say about it. Mukutbhai, having got an opportunity to talk, explained everything about that lady, and suggested that Papa should not go there. Papa said, "Ramdas promised to visit her house."

Papa finished taking his tea, and massage was started. All others came out and joined Mataji in the kitchen for tea. Mukutbhai asked Mataji if she knew anything about Papa's promise to visit a lady's house that evening. Mataji said she did not. Mukutbhai then narrated the story.

Mataji listened quietly and said : "If by going to her house we are going to give pain to many, I would say it is better that we do not go. On the other hand, even though the woman was a bad character it is quite possible she repents of her past conduct and is now aspiring to lead a noble life ; so it would do her a lot of good if Papa goes there. Let us abide by Papa's decision. If he goes there, it must do her good. If he does not go, then also there is no harm. Though he has given a promise, there is no harm in cancelling the visit, as it is not always that we can carry out our promise. I do not know what Papa is going to do. In this connection I shall tell you a story.

"A saint was camping in a village. He was giving great joy to the villagers with his bhajan, discourses and the like. Another saint, who was also moving from place to place, happened to be in a village nearby, and he was invited by some devotees of the former village to come to their place and spend a few days with them. The saint accepted the invitation and was being escorted by them. When they were within a mile's reach of the village, a woman of that village suddenly came forward and fell at the saint's feet sobbing, and requested him to be good enough to bless her by first visiting her house and taking bhiksha. He immediately agreed. Now this woman was a prostitute and it was her ardent desire to invite this saint to her house and feed him once. She feared that if she invited the saint after his coming to the village, people would dissuade him from accepting her invitation. That was why she played this game.

"On reaching the village the saint told the devotees that he would go first to the house of the woman who invited him on the way. Those who knew that woman informed the saint of her ill-fame and tried to dissuade him. But the saint said that he had to carry out his promise. In spite of their protests he went there and partook of the food served by her. As soon as the saint got up after his meal, the woman fell at his feet and did not get up at all. She died there at the saint's feet. She had no relations and was helpless. The saint therefore stayed there and did everything necessary for the cremation and other rites. The villagers, including the other saint who was previously camping with them, very much resented this action of the mahatma and on that ground boycotted him. He did not mind it. The next day during the daily worship at the temple, when the other saint was doing pooja of Rama, Sita, Hanuman and other deities, in the presence of a large gathering of devotees of the village, they saw a strange phenomenon. Tears were flowing profusely from the eyes of the deities. All were gazing in wonder and a voice from inside the temple spoke : 'I came to you in human form and you insulted me. Now

you do pooja to me in these images !' This opened their eyes. The saint and the villagers in one body went to the house of the prostitute where the other mahatma was, fell at his feet begging for pardon and thereafter treated him with all reverence, love and hospitality.

"So in this case, let us see what Papa is going to decide."

When the massage was over, the door of Papa's room was opened and Mataji and others went in. Mataji asked Papa: "Papa, it seems, we have to go out somewhere."

Papa: "They say it is not a happy thing. There is some trouble about it. So Ramdas thinks we should drop the idea."

Mataji: "Let us drop the idea, Papa. That is also what I wanted. If that woman comes again, send her to me. I shall explain why we did not go to her. For the sake of one we are not going to cause unhappiness to many."

Papa and Mataji visited her house for a few minutes on the day of their departure from Bhavnagar, and thus fulfilled her ardent desire.

January 20, 1956

534. Morning. N. C. Patel (of Hongkong) was expected to come and spend a few days with Papa. The car had gone to the aerodrome for him. But he did not come. Perhaps he had to cancel the programme owing to the disturbances in Bombay. Papa was told about Patel's non-arrival as soon as he came back to the room from the bhajan-hall. So the rest of the talk of the morning was all about the Bombay disturbances. Concluding, Papa said: "In spite of these, India has got her own greatness. We should not be pessimistic. From all these, something good is going to come. Dulles has said that three times the world was on the verge of war, but war was averted. There is always a clash of ideologies in the world. Every nation holds that her own ideas are great. Russia complains of America and America of Russia. Russia says her ideals are the best and America says her ideals are the best. But both seem to stand on the same level. Politics is a dirty game. Utter selfishness is its basis; there is no real desire to live in harmony with the neighbours. They call it co-existence. That is a mere word. That cannot be achieved unless we have found a permanent and real basis. That basis is within us. Even if we realise that and become saints, we say the external prakriti which is subject to gunas is likely to fight. Rajoguna causes all the disturbances. All the three gunas are active in the external play."

535. Indubhai Thakker and another friend came to request Papa to lay the foundation stone of a temple on 27th January and preside over a meeting, Papa said: "He cannot be the president. He will simply attend. Presidentship is a big position and should be given to somebody who can talk well." Indubhai said, "Whether you preside or not, I want Papa's blessings for the occasion." Papa agreed that he would be there and give his blessing for the success of the venture. It was fixed that Papa should go there at 9-30 a.m. on the 27th.

Indubhai: "The temple is in the heart of the city."

Papa: "It is significant. We have to build a temple in the heart of everybody. So it is good that it is in the heart of the city."

Indubhai and his friend left. Soon after their departure a sadhu, dressed in white with chandan marks on his forehead and other such insignia handed a note to Papa. As it was in Gujarati, Papa asked the sadhu to read it. It was from the mother whose house Papa had promised to visit the previous evening, but did not. She wrote to say that she had made preparations to receive Papa but was disappointed. She now prayed that Papa should go to her house that day. Papa looked at Mataji who was sitting near and explained to her. Papa then told the sadhu that he would surely go to her house one day but could not say when, and that intimation would be sent to her when it was decided. The sadhu left.

As Papa wished to start from the ashram at 3-30 p.m. sharp for Ghanshyam Sinhji's place, it was necessary that the afternoon programme of talks should be closed at 3-15 p.m. Papa kindly requested the audience to permit him to close the talks earlier as he had to go elsewhere at 3-30 p.m. Hearing this humble request for permission, one lady said: "Swamiji, if we do not permit you to close the talks earlier, will you not do so yourself?"

Papa (*with his characteristic smile*): "No, if you do not permit him, he will not go earlier; but he is sure that you are all so loving to him that you will grant his request." (*Loud laughter*) All got up and Papa came away.

3-30 p.m. Papa, Mataji and party started for the garden of Sri Ghanshyam Sinhji of Limbdi. Ghanshyam Sinhji had come to the ashram to see Papa and requested him to go to his place sometime before the 22nd, as his wife and children were to leave for Bombay that day. The day was warm. The car could go only very slowly due to the dusty road. The dust got into the car and gave a lot of trouble. When they were speaking about that nuisance, Papa remarked, "After all we are eating our own dust." He meant that the dust within the car was raised by their own car and not by any other car that went ahead. He added that therefore they had no reason to grumble. They reached the place at 4 o'clock and Ghanshyam Sinhji was waiting to receive Papa. George, Baba, Lingappa, Arjunbhai of Rajkot

and another devotee of the same place were in the party. They had tea. Then all went out in Ghanshyam Sinhji's jeep to his garden where, after seeing his fruit trees, they walked a short distance on their way back, and returned to the ashram around 6 o'clock getting mouthfuls of dust, on the way.

536. George who came on the 8th January was waiting for his passage to England. He did not have sufficient money.

**'Papa's
contact**

will ruin me! Mataji casually asked S. when George was expecting his passage. S. replied: "Natverlal has been requested to make the necessary reservation for him in any cheap boat sailing for England. D. H. has left some money for him and the balance necessary will have to be given by the ashram."

Mataji: "Why? We could give him the whole fare. I thought we would be giving him the amount while we are here. If we are not going to spend for such a deserving case, for what better purpose are we going to spend?"

The conversation between S. and Mataji was going on in Papa's room while the evening bhajan was in progress in the shamiana outside. George was sitting by the side of S. Mataji then wanted S. to ask George what he had gained by Papa's contact after his coming to India. When asked, George replied, "Everything."

S: "How will this help you in your life when you go home?"

George: "Perhaps it will ruin me completely!"

All had a good laugh over it. George thought he would be unfit to take up any gainful employment at home.

January 21, 1956

537. 10 a.m. In Papa's room. Papa and S. were alone. All the devotees had left after the morning bhajan. Papa was reading the few letters that had come by the morning post. A devotee (R. B.) came in and sat before Papa.

**Bow to
God's will**

Papa: "How are you?"

R. B.: "Quite well, Swamiji. I could not come earlier as my sister is ill and I had to see to her treatment. Early this morning I had to go to the doctor. So it is God's will that I could not come earlier. I am not praying to God to give me this or that. I thought it would be the best thing to submit to whatever He does. Whenever a situation arises where I cannot decide one way or the other, I remember a story told by my father when I was a boy.

"Once there lived a very rich man who was always going about riding a good mare. One evening, a poor man saw him about to get on the mare. A sudden desire arose in him to have a horse of his own, and a fervent prayer went forth to God to give him a horse. Now the mare was in an advanced stage of pregnancy. The rich man mounted on it and rode off. After going a few furlongs, the mare showed signs of labour and the rich man got down and allowed the mare to lie down on the roadside. In a short time the mare gave birth to a colt. It was late in the evening and the rich man was wondering how to take the mare home with its young one. Suddenly he saw a man approaching him. It was the same poor man who prayed for a horse. The rich man ordered the poor man to carry the colt home, and he himself walked behind, the mare following. The poor man then thought, 'Oh God! I prayed for a horse. What have you given me now?—a horse that I have to carry!' So this is what happens when we ask God to grant us something."

Papa laughed and said: "So what we have to do is to bend and bow to the will of God. Whatever He does is all right, and we submit. That is the only way we can remain ever in peace."

R.B.: "When I started business about ten years ago, I had practically no money with me. I was wondering how the business would go on. Then it struck me that in *the Ramayana* the instance is given of the monkeys who built a bridge for Sri Rama to reach Lanka. The monkeys took big stones, repeated the name 'Rama' and threw them on the water. The stones floated and the bridge was constructed. If that was possible, what is it that is impossible? So I kept a picture of Rama in my shop and also wrote on the wall the name 'Rama'. Mysteriously the business flourished for the last ten years, and only recently I remembered it, when I had a difference with my partner. I also know that a devotee never becomes rich. Is it not a fact?"

Papa: "You are right. When money comes, devotion goes away."

R.B.: "In this connection, I remember a beautiful explanation given in some bhakti-scriptures, why a devotee of Vishnu does not become rich. Lord Vishnu gives so much respect to His bhakta that He even considers him as His elder brother. Such being the case, for Lakshmi Devi, the consort of Vishnu, the bhakta becomes her brother-in-law (elder brother of the husband). In Gujarat households, a woman does not speak to or even look at the elder brother of her husband. So Lakshmi Devi, the Goddess of wealth, does not even look at the face of the bhakta whom her husband (Vishnu) considers as His elder brother. That is why a bhakta is always poor."
(Loud laughter)

538. By then a few devotees had come in and taken their seats in the room and were attentively listening to the talk.
God rescues
His devotees

R.B. : "I feel we think of God more out of fear than out of love. Is it not a fact?"

Papa : "Fear of what? It is because of fear that you approach Him. A child rushes to its mother when it is afraid of something. So also if we are afraid of anything, we think of God, as we know that by remembering Him we will be saved."

R.B. : "Sometimes, due to fear, we get so close to God that wonderful things are achieved. I have heard the story of a pigeon. It seems a pigeon was sitting on the branch of a tree. A hunter was aiming an arrow at it. It was in great danger. It could fly up and escape. It looked up and saw a big eagle sitting there, which would easily swallow the pigeon. So it realised that it was in the worst of danger. Then it prayed to God intensely, and lo! the hunter shot the arrow and fell on the ground, as God came in the form of a serpent and bit him on his foot. The arrow aimed at the pigeon missed the mark and hit the eagle. Thus the pigeon was saved by God from both dangers when it intensely prayed at a very critical time."

Papa : "Ramdas has heard this story. Again, you have the instance of Gajendra (the elephant) who prayed intensely to God when it was in danger of being dragged away by a crocodile. The Lord appeared on the scene and killed the crocodile."

Mukund Rai : "But here it was not the body of the elephant that was saved; its soul attained moksha. So what we want is not the kind of help the pigeon got. When in danger, if we pray to God to save us and He really comes and saves us, and we continue to lead the same old life, we have gained nothing. On the other hand, in that great danger, if we pray to God and God gives us darshan, and our body is shed in that situation, what does it matter to us? By the darshan of God at the time of dropping the body, we will attain our goal."

Papa : "You are right. But one thing is sure. If you pray to God, God comes to your rescue, and you are saved from the situation, you will not be able to lead the same old life; your life will undergo a great transformation.

"There was a sepoy in the service of a State. One night when he was on duty as a sentry, he saw at a distance some devotees going along the road in a procession, singing God's name. At this the sepoy was overpowered by emotion. He ran from his post and joined the bhajan party and started singing God's name in their company.

The whole night was spent in bhajan and the sepoy returned to his post of duty in the morning. Soon he was called up before his commanding officer to answer the charge against him for having been absent from his post the previous night. He explained all that happened. Though the charge was a serious one, he was let off with a warning.

"The next night also he was on duty, and again the same bhajan party was seen passing that side, singing God's name. Though the sepoy was charged and warned for his absence the previous night, he could not resist the temptation to go and join the party. He threw away his rifle and ran to join the bhajan party. He spent all the night with the party and returned in the morning to his place of duty. He knew he would be punished for his absence. So he thought it would be better to go and voluntarily report to the commanding officer. The officer could not understand what the sepoy was saying. He said: 'Why do you say you were absent from duty? I went at midnight to the sentry-post to inspect if you were there. And I saw you there. So where is the question of your absence?'

"At this the sepoy was stunned. He could make out that God graciously took his form and stood sentry to save him. The grace of God deeply moved him. He thought, 'Instead of spending my life as a sepoy, why should I not dedicate my whole life to the remembrance and service of God who is so benevolent?' He renounced everything and became a great devotee of God. Thus, when we have the grace of God, it transforms us completely and turns us towards Him."

539. Mataji was saying in the morning that her right eye was throbbing, which indicated to her that all was not well with the world. She
Mataji's said she was having that throbbing sensation for over a week and
premonitions she was wondering what was wrong. Then she understood that it
portended the riots that broke out two days later. She further said that she had such
a feeling every time before the outbreak of any big conflict or war. Ever since the
riots started in Bombay, Mataji and Papa were very anxious about the situation.
She often said she did not feel much for the dead, but she could not but intensely
feel for the horrible condition of the families of the dead. She gave expression to
her feelings many times in the course of a day.

When Papa heard that morning that the army had taken charge of some parts of Bombay, where, according to strict curfew orders, they would shoot at sight anybody who might be seen in the street at unauthorised hours, he was very much pained. He said again and again, "How many poor people will suffer!" He was, however, happy in the evening when he got the news that conditions were getting better.

540. 10 a.m. Papa's room. Morning bhajan was over. Sai Sattar Shah
Saints feel was away those four or five days. An old man entered the room and
for the sat a little away from Papa. There were already two or three
world devotees with Papa. The talks were about the riots in Bombay.
Information had been received that since the previous night riots
had been much less and the city was gradually returning to normalcy. Papa was, of
course, happy to hear it.

The old man who was quietly listening, without speaking a word, now got up, went near Papa, sat in front of him, and started something like a lecture. He went on for five minutes and ended it with a question: "Swamiji, what will be the condition of the poor householders now living in Bombay? They are naturally anxious about their kith and kin, and they have many desires of the world. They will be greatly suffering. In a jnani it may not give rise to any reaction. He is not concerned even with his own body. Then why should he be concerned with the riots? He is enjoying the bliss of the Atman."

Papa: "Don't think that the saints are unconcerned with what is going on. Their heart really aches when they see such suffering. Householders feel only when their family and friends suffer. But saints feel for the whole world. Their vision is universal. Householders feel for others who are their friends or relatives, because of attachment. Saints feel for others because of their love for all."

Old man: "Can a saint not stop the riot if he goes to Bombay, gets into the crowd, and advises people not to fight? His spiritual light and radiance must attract them and stop them from evil-doing."

Papa: "It may be possible; it may not be possible."

Old man: "It is said that in the presence of a man who practises absolute ahimsa, even wild animals give up their ferocity and behave as friends. Then why do you say it may or may not be possible for a saint to stop the riot?"

Papa: "As you say, it may be quite possible for a saint to stop the riot, if God wills so. Gandhiji was able to do so to a great extent in Noakhali and many other places, during the Hindu-Muslim riots. So it is quite possible."

The old man went on talking about the riots and various other things for a long time. Papa was half listening to him, without giving any reply. At last he said: "What we have to do first is to control our mind and thereby realise the presence of God within and without before we can think of helping others. We must do intense sadhana for our own illumination. 'Physician, heal thyself'. Once we have attained what we have to attain, we will be able to radiate peace and joy."

LI

Ramdas-ashram, Bhavnagar, January 27, 1956

541. It was the day for laying the foundation stone of the Jagadish
A temple Mandir. Papa had accepted Indubhai Thakker's invitation to be
function present at the ceremony. Papa left at 9-30 a.m. after bhajan and
 in a few minutes reached the spot, about a mile from the ashram.
He was received by Indubhai, some of the trustees and prominent people of the place
and conducted, along with Mataji to a decorated dais. Papa was later taken inside
the existing temple and was offered worship in the vedic style after which he
returned to the dais. A few people spoke on the occasion and the Collector of the
district who was to formally lay the foundation stone was taken inside and he too
returned in a few minutes. Papa, acceding to the request of the organizers, spoke a
few words and blessed the efforts of the devotees to raise a new structure for the
temple. The party then returned to the ashram.

January 29, 1956

542. 10 a.m. Papa: "To be a servant of God is a privilege. To be a
A privilege servant is very difficult. To be a master is easy. To be a disciple
to be a is difficult. To be a guru is easy. We have so many gurus now,
servant but few disciples. Hanuman was the ideal servant of God. Because
of God he was an ideal servant, he is worshipped everywhere, especially
 in Uttar Pradesh. He could serve well because he had no upadhis
(encumbrances). He was a brahmachari and therefore had no interest in life other
than service of his master. In U.P. there are many Hanuman temples. They smear
some red colour on a piece of stone (sometimes without any shape) and worship it
as Hanuman. What colour is it? How do they prepare that colour?"

Devotee: "They mix kumkum and ghee."

543. Devotee: "I get a glimpse of Satchidananda. I feel extreme joy.
What But my mind descends to lower desires again."

desirelessness

means

Papa: "Desires are powerful in you. You must see that they get
weaker day by day until you are perfectly one with the atman and
enjoy the bliss continuously without break. Before you get to that blessed state, it

is 'touch and go'. You get experience for some time and you lose it. The mind comes in contact with the outside world and you are unhappy. But when you have intense desire to be one with the atman, to realise that you are the immortal Self, the duration of your bliss in the realisation or experience of the atman will extend for longer and longer periods. It will encroach upon worldly activities, which will be greatly lessened and desires will get weakened. Then the inner joy will express itself in all your activities.

"Desirelessness is what is needed. Desirelessness means that you do not expect anything for yourself from the work that you do. This is lokasangraha. Your powers are used for the good of others. At this time the bliss of the atman is unbroken. At other times, you lose it, because you are involved in so many things for your own good or partly for others also. The work must be efficiently done for others without the lower self intruding. That can be done only when you enjoy the perfect state of bliss within, through the realisation of the Self as yourself—'I am all bliss and peace'. When you enjoy that bliss continually, no desire for sense enjoyment will be left in you, because you have found the supreme joy. Your actions then automatically become selfless. You cannot keep quiet. You must be doing something, and that something will be done for the sake of others. You do not need anything from outside to give you happiness, because you have found self-existent happiness in the atman. That does not depend upon any external object.

"Why should God have created this world? We say it is for play. So you are also playing. Play the part. He is within, prompting you to do things. Do everything in that spirit. Then you will enjoy supreme bliss. The knowledge of the atman will be constantly with you. That requires constant practice. Suddenly you cannot jump into the infinite ocean of bliss. In the beginning you have to dip yourself for some time and see the difference between the joy you get in that and the happiness you get outside. Go on dipping yourself more and more until you dissolve yourself in it; and then there is no more coming out, because there is nobody to come out. You are one with the Supreme Reality. You can boldly declare: 'I am He'—'Anal Haq'—'Aham Brahmasmi'. Go on doing sadhana. One day something in you will snap. Hridaya granthi breaks one day and then you know you are the immortal Self."

Devotee: "Guru kripa hi kevalam: It is nothing but guru's grace."

Papa: "Ramdas is telling you how guru kripa works. To talk about God means to get pure joy and peace. Just as the lotus blossoms in the presence of the sun, when you hear the talk of God your heart blossoms. So satsang is necessary. It is so elevating."

544. 2 p.m. Papa was sitting in his room with Mataji, Shukla and
The bhavas S. Shukla was called out by somebody. After a short time he came
 in and told Papa that a young man with his wife wished to see Papa
privately. Papa asked them to come in. They came, prostrated and sat near him.

Papa : "What do you want to say ?"

Visitor : "I want to ask you something about my wife. She is a devotee and enjoys singing bhajans. Sometimes she is so much immersed in the bhajan that she forgets many things. She says, when she starts singing and closes her eyes she sees before her Shivalinga or something like that and she is afraid. Sometimes she is absorbed in the bhajan and has no idea of what is happening outside. Today, while she was cooking she was, as usual, repeating God's name. She had washed rice and put it in the boiling water for cooking. Forgetful of this, she again washed another quantity of rice and put it in the same water. What can be done about this ?"

Papa : "There is nothing wrong in this. You need not be anxious. When love is awakened in the devotees, they forget the things of the world. All this comes under the ashta bhavas. It does not last long. It comes for a while and disappears. You say, she gets the vision of her Ishta (Shivalinga). Let her pray to God not to give her these ashta bhavas. By this prayer she will be soon free from these."

Visitor : "Sometimes she starts crying."

Papa : "These are all the different bhavas. Some cry, some laugh, some have their hair standing on end, and so on. They should pray to God to take these away and grant them the sahaja avastha—normal state. Your wife need not be afraid at all. She is in a good state. Let her go on with her bhajans."

Visitor's wife : "I am afraid of what other people may think if I neglect my duties and do certain strange things."

Papa : "Why do you worry what others will think of you? They may say anything. You need not mind their opinion too much, especially in such matters. Take courage and go on with bhajan; pray to God to lift you up soon from the bhavas."

She was satisfied and got some courage. The couple left after paying their respects to Papa.

As soon as they left, another young man who had earlier come with his wife then came in with his little son. Sai Baba, he had reported, was giving a lot of trouble to his wife! He had appeared before her every now and then, especially in dreams with the result she got terribly frightened and nervous. Papa had given his

blessings to her and assured her that there was no cause for fear as Baba would not harm anybody. As soon as this young man came in, Papa asked him how his wife was, to which he replied : "Her condition is very bad. She is not even able to cook."

Papa : "Yes. Your wife is not in a fit condition to cook. You must make some other arrangement for cooking. You should not force her to cook. Be kind and loving to her."

Papa called the young man's son near and patted him on the back. Both of them made pranams and left the room.

February 2, 1956

545. A very old man from Jasdan, a village about a hundred miles from Bhavnagar, came and sat before Papa. Papa looked at him and immediately asked : "How is Ramnam repetition going on?" This was a very surprising question. Apparently Papa had not seen him or heard of him and the old man did not even introduce himself. But the conversation between Papa and the old man was on intimate terms.

**Bhakta and
Bhagavan —
a thrilling
scene**

As soon as Papa asked this question, the old man, with tears in his eyes, fell at Papa's feet and sobbing like a child, tried to say : "Ramnam is going on. I want nothing but Ram—nothing but Ram."

The old man stayed at the ashram. Whenever he had an opportunity, he would come and sit in a corner in Papa's room. He was seen repeating God's name continuously, with a rosary in hand. During bhajan he sat in a corner and joined others in the chorus. One could easily see that he was then in ecstasy, bubbling with joy.

Papa later came to know that the old man was too poor to travel by train or bus and so had come on foot all the way from Jasdan. His condition was miserable. He wore dirty and torn clothes. However, he was always in a state of inner joy.

When he informed Papa that he was leaving, Papa wished that he might be given a railway ticket to travel to his destination. He came to know about that and was perturbed. He felt how lukewarm his devotion should be to accept money or ticket from Papa for his return journey! So he told others that however poor he might be, he did not like to accept any gift. When informed, Papa assured him that there was no harm in accepting money for a ticket, as it was given by Ram Himself. He agreed.

At the time of leaving, he knelt before Papa with folded hands and prayed to him, "Maharaj, I want nothing but your holy feet. Blessed I am to have got them." Saying this, he placed his head at Papa's feet. Papa placed his hands on his head as well as on his back, and blessed him. He got up and again kneeling, prayed to Papa : "I do not want the Durbar of Delhi, I do not want any material prosperity. Let me have God's name constantly and when I leave this body I should remember you. This is my prayer." Saying this, he again fell at Papa's feet, sobbing like a child. Papa again placed his hands on his head and, patting him on the back, blessed him : "Your wish will be fulfilled." The old man then got up. Tears were freely flowing down his cheeks. He was so much overpowered by emotion that he pressed his own body with both his hands as if he did not know what he was to do. He once more fell at Papa's feet and laid himself there for some minutes, sobbing. Papa asked him to get up and assured him that his wishes would be fulfilled.

He got up, prostrated before Mataji and everybody else in the room, and left. Everyone was quiet during this thrilling scene, all eyes were on the old man and Papa—Bhakta and Bhagavan.

A little later Sompura came and prostrated before Papa.

Papa : "What is the news ? What is the news ? What is the news ?"

Sompura : "News ? God is all love. God is all compassion. God is mercy."

Papa : "Is this the news ? This is stale news ; Ramdas had known this many years ago !" (*Laughter*)

LII

When Papa was in Calcutta in March, 1954, with Sri Hiralal Kamdar, the mahant of Sri Hanuman Mandir, Porbandar, had gone there on purpose to request Papa to instal the murtis of Sri Ram, Sita, Lakshman and Hanuman in the new temple. The love, fervour and devotion of the mahant made Papa accept the invitation, which normally he would not. The date of the installation after the completion of the mandir was communicated to Papa, by both the mahant and Sri Gunvantrai Kamdar. Papa, Mataji and party left Anandashram on the morning of 25th January 1957, reaching Porbandar on the 30th *via* Bombay.

Porbandar, January 30, 1957

546. On Papa's arrival he was taken straight to the new Hanuman
Sri Hanuman Mandir. The massive mandir because of its height could be seen
Mandir from a long distance. When the party reached the mandir, the
 murti of Sri Hanuman was being then kept in the room ready for the
pratishtha. Papa touched and garlanded the murti. After seeing the other murtis
also in the temple they left for Gunvantrai Kamdar's house.

On the 31st January, Papa and party went to the temple again and ascending the stairs had a good view of the beautiful structure of the temple. Sri Hanuman was to be installed in the ground floor while Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshman were to be installed in the second floor. The first and third floors were kept vacant. On the fourth floor there was an inscription of the Ram Mantra.

On the 1st February, Papa, followed by Mataji and a few others, went to the palace and spent about an hour in the company of the Maharaja and Maharani. In the evening there was a grand procession. The leading car was driven by the Maharaja with Papa at his side, while Mataji, Rani Lalitha Devi and the Maharani occupied the rear seat. Behind Papa's car was the one carrying Sai Sattar Shah and two other mahatmas. A few more cars followed and last came an open lorry, well decorated, with the murtis of Sri Ram, Sita, Lakshman and Ganesh. The procession lasted about an hour and went through most of the important streets of Porbandar.

After the procession, Papa visited the Kanya Gurukul built by Sri Nanji Kalidas Mehta. The student kanyas were performing a yajna there. Papa was taken round the

Gurukul buildings erected recently. Long rows of fine buildings for housing the school, boarding home, library, laboratory and so on, made the place look like a self-contained colony. Papa then went to the Hanuman temple, where a bhajan was held for an hour and a half.

2nd February. Papa visited the temple at 9 a.m. when the yajna was started. Gunvantrai Kamdar and Champaben Kamdar performed the Ganesh-pooja after which the yajna rituals began. Papa returned to his residence at 11 a.m. and again went to the temple at 2 p.m. The sacred yajna fire was lit in Papa's presence. Many purohits and eminent pandits took part in the yajna. Papa stayed on till 6-30 p.m.

The second and the third days of the pratishtha ceremony were very inspiring. On Papa's arrival at the temple at 9 a.m. the second day, there was a long procession headed by about fifty ladies and young girls, each carrying a pot of consecrated water for abhisheka of the murtis. Accompanied by band and other paraphernalia the procession went through important streets and reached Hanuman Mandir. The murtis of Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshman were brought to the pandal where the yajna was going on. Papa stood before the murtis, washed their feet, worshipped and garlanded them. This was followed by pooja and abhisheka in the vedic style by the purohits. The consecrated water carried by the women in procession was then poured on the murtis to the accompaniment of vedic chants.

In the afternoon also the yajna was in full swing. About 5 p.m. Papa offered arati to Sri Ram and other murtis. This was followed by bhajan in the temple for an hour.

The last day's function was a grand affair. Papa reached the temple at 9 a.m. as the yajna was in progress. Pooja and abhisheka to Sri Ram and other murtis were performed by the priests according to sastric injunctions.

The muhurta fixed for the pratishtha was between 1 p.m. and 2-30 p.m. First, Papa performed the installation of the murti of Hanumanji on the ground floor, with the assistance of the purohits in the vedic style.

Mataji and others stood near Papa. The installation was, indeed, a thrilling scene. Then all went upstairs where Papa with Mataji's assistance performed the installation of Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshman. The Hanuman flag was hoisted on the top of the mandir. The pratishtha was now complete.

Pooja was then performed to Hanumanji by the mahant of the temple. For Sri Ram, Sita and Lakshman, Papa performed the pooja and arati. Mataji helped him, standing at his side. After pooja there, all went upstairs where the Ramnam slab had been installed by the mahant. Pooja and arati there was done by Mataji. She did



BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS AND MATAJI KRISHNABAI

this in her own way, first worshipping Papa and then the Ramnam slab. She did arati for Papa and Ramnam together. Altogether, it was a happy and memorable function.

5th February. Papa installed the old murti of Sri Hanumanji in the new temple, near the new murti. There were no priests present. The mahant was immersed in ecstasy. He was simply jumping, singing God's name. All glory to Him!

After attending the functions for a week in Porbandar, Papa and party went to Bombay for a stay. From there they proceeded to Poona to spend a few days at Hari Krishna Mandir, on the loving invitation of both Sri Dilip Kumar Roy and Srimati Indira Devi. The beautiful account of the visit of Papa and Mataji as given by Dadaji (Dilip Kumar Roy) himself in a letter to his Western disciples is reproduced below.

547.

Visit to
Dilip Kumar's
Ashram in Poona

Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona,
16 March 1957.

Dear Richard and Don,

You were right in felicitating us. The purifying contact of Swami Ramdas and Mataji Krishnabai for three full days, was, indeed, a blessed experience for us all. I will try now to give you a brief account of the hurricane of joy that passed over our little ashram, Hari Krishna Mandir, during their three days' stay with us. Only it was a hurricane that cleansed the atmosphere without harming even a tender petal of rose-aspiration.

Yes, the saints cleanse and purify without doing violence to our unregenerate nature. When you will come here, you will read with us *the Bhagavat* (you must) and then we shall recite together (1-1-15).

"Even the Ganga's waters will take long to make men clean :

But saints with one touch purify all who transgress and sin."

The Bhagavat has not overstated the magic of the boons true saints come to give. Swami Ramdas—or Papa as they call him tenderly—did act on all who contacted him as a purifying agent. Only he purified not by dint of the heat of Rudra: he melted the dross in all he greeted by the light of his beneficent personality, his laughter (with a merry twinkle, as often as not), his crystalline simplicity, his refreshing anecdotes and, above all, by what he has become through his one-pointed concentration on Ram whose loyal servant he has become today to

be the better able to teach us, unhappy egoists, the supreme bliss of being a servant of the Lord. "Chakar Rakho ji"—sang Mira, the unforgettable slave (dasi) of the One Master of us all. But now few can practise in life what they preach through their songs and lectures! Thousands sing this immemorial song but rarely comes one, like Ramdas or Krishnabai, to us to show how one can live up to the ideal. But to come down to earth-life on which they acted here in Poona with all the alchemic power the Lord has endowed them with.

We all went to the station—a big crowd of devotees—with garlands and flowers. They alighted from the train—three of them: Papa (Ramdas), Mataji Krishnabai, and Swami Satchidananda, their devoted disciple.

Papa and Mataji put us, Indira and myself, at our ease at once. Here Mataji is endowed with a native gift as it were, for her very movement is so natural and simple that Indira, who had to work hard from daybreak to midnight to feed scores of guests, heaved a sigh of relief—she told me confidentially, after having realised what Mataji could be in action. We had, indeed, heard a lot about her greatness and unassuming self-effacing personality. But, as a Bengali adage has it, one can hardly know another truly till one has lived under the same roof with him (or her). Mataji came as though to be tested on this basis till we, who came to know her, living under the same roof, found that she was all and even more than she was made out by her devotees. She ate with us at the same table, often serving us while partaking of the prasad left by Papaji. A supremely loving soul and utterly self-unconscious, she was always mindful of all who sat at table with her. How she laughed and talked unconstrainedly with us and comported herself as though she had known us all her life! Somebody had described her as shy. But we felt that she was only natural and transparent—like a limpid stream purling along or shall we say, a flower nodding in the breeze—but a flower of grace which not only wafts fragrance but smiles at all who happen to be there. Sahaja is the word in mystic terminology which applies to her: it means—utterly at ease, spontaneous and natural. I would certainly not call her shy or timid, for she is strong enough in all conscience when strength alone can meet the situation. An instance: somebody invited Ramdasji to a school in the evening. He agreed. Suddenly Mataji stepped in, unasked, and put her foot down on it and in simple Hindi vetoed it all. Somebody said: "But Papa has consented." Mataji pursed her lips and said: "He will consent to anything. He is a child pure and simple. But then he is not well and cannot take liberties with his health. You may take him there between 4 and 5 in the afternoon but not in the evening. He mustn't catch a chill." The persons who had come to invite murmured something about the afternoon being inconvenient. Then Mataji shook her head: "Sorry if the time does not suit you. Can't be helped for I can't allow him to go out in the evening." So they had to agree to the afternoon. You can't call such a ruler shy. No. Sahaja is the title that fits her like a glove. Indira calls her great in

that she has fulfilled the ideal of Indian womanhood : sweet, gracious and graceful, but neither timid nor vacillating, not indeed overassertive but unyielding when yielding would be wrong. True, she has an innate repugnance to be in the limelight anywhere and prefers to act from the background, but she acts all right even when she keeps herself in the shadows. That is why before leaving our place Ramdas said to me : "Ramdas is only a talker ; it's she who's the doer." Mataji laughed and waved the compliment away with a mere "Bah !" It's indeed a beautiful relationship—theirs—one supplementing as well as complementing the other. I can recall no other instance among the saints I have seen in my life, where such an exquisite spiritual relationship can be claimed to have flowered out so spontaneously. "The other day, Mataji," I said to her as I greeted her at the station, "I spoke to a big gathering of our devotees about you for about forty minutes." She just smiled and said : "But why me ? You should have spoken only of Papa". Truly a remarkable blend of strength and humility ! But to come back to Papa now.

We chalked out a tentative programme subject to alterations from day-to-day. Papa agreed to meet the devotees and seekers who would come for two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon. The evenings were to be devoted to bhajan-singing (chorus and solo) and arati before the image of our Lord. We all sang, nightly, an arati song composed by Indira as a sadhaka moved the censer up and down round and round before the image. Thereafter prasad was to be distributed.

Our hall is generally crowded in the mornings. So we spread extra mats in the adjoining room and veranda to accommodate many more who were likely to come.

We were not mistaken. The hall was packed to suffocation by 9 in the morning. Many had come from Bombay. A dear friend of ours, Vishnoo Shivadasani, had come all the way from Hyderabad, and his wife from Delhi. Vishnoo proved his mettle by posing questions tirelessly to be met by Papa's equally tireless answers. This duel of words was soon to become a feature of our daily programme.

It is not possible to give you in a letter such as this even a substantial resume of the day-to-day happenings during Papa's brief stay with us ; everyday was replete with events that broke out into unforeseen thrills from moment to moment as it were, especially during these eager talks of the devotees with Papa ; the questions asked, the answers given, the clarifications sought, the implications of the statements brought out through illuminating similes, and last, though by no means the least, the challenges flung to be met by Papa's ready repartees which intermittently evoked ripples of laughter in our big hall. Only one thing must be noted : Papa is not one for mouthing cliches. Not that he says anything which runs counter to the findings of India's greatest sages (after all, all truths are as old as the hills) but that he puts it all in his own with a simple inimitable charm that hardly ever misses the target,

reinforced, as often as not, by his infectious laughter as simple as it is heart-warming. Also, let me add, his answers were so effective as they were, as much because of their aptness as because of the way they were worded—in the simplest language, filled with images, starred with anecdotes and mellowed by his disarming laughter. To give an instance.

Somebody asked about how saints spoke. 'Pat' came the answer: "Like the proverbial parrot to teach other parrots." A startling answer, indeed! And so Papa added quickly: "A parrot, you see, learns to speak most easily when taught by another parrot. So a mirror is held before him in which he sees his own image and takes it for a fellow parrot. Now the trainer hides himself behind the mirror and speaks the words which the parrot thinks are addressed to him by the other parrot in the mirror, and so is fired to repeat them faultlessly. Similarly, the Lord speaks through the saints, who, being human like us, stimulate us to emulate them."

Sometime, again, Papa would exploit very ordinary happenings to bring home the position of the mystic vis-a-vis the divine. Here is an instance to the point. "How could we know," somebody asked, "that the Lord is so near and dear to us and how can we grow to love Him without having met Him?" Papa smiled and answered: "Once upon a time, there was a mother with a little son. The father had gone abroad to make a living. The little son had never seen him but had grown to love him having heard from his mother daily how great his father was. One day a playmate of his laughed at him when he said that he loved his father heart and soul. He said: "How can you love one you haven't so much as seen?" The son replied with a touching simplicity: 'But my mother has seen him.' Comment on such a beautiful parable is superfluous: it convinces by its very simplicity. Only faith leads to love. There is a Bengali song Sri Ramakrishna often used to quote: "*Na jene, nam shune kane man diye tai lipta holo*": "I knew Him not but heard His Name and so my heart was drawn by Him."

It is not necessary nor possible to record in detail his numerous answers to the numerous questions of the Poonaites. Satchidananda has recorded his answers to questions galore in Papa's *WORLD IS GOD* and *RAMDAS SPEAKS*. I have given the two answers he gave here only to illustrate the nature of some of the questions he had to answer here, as well as to stress their appositeness.

It is not that devotees came here only to see him. Hundreds came, as they usually do, to pay homage to the Lord's Image in our temple as also to attend the Bhajan soirees and matin services. But these too came to be attracted by Papa the moment they were greeted by his radiantly cheerful face, lovely smile and gracious willingness to answer their questions again and again—often enough the same questions answered from different angles, illustrated with different anecdotes. We did, indeed, wonder how Papa, who is anything but strong physically (in fact he has always been rather frail and said here once that he owes his long life to Mataji's

careful tending and nursing) and is over seventy-odd years in age, could go on meeting new-comers from day-to-day and welcome them with his never-failing smile and laughter and answers and repartees! Of course, questions such as these carry their own answers: in this case the answer being that it is his spontaneous love for all, the love of a seer who sees his beloved Ram in all and so cannot help but love, that endows him with the strength to go all out to help those who need help.

One day—on the 28th February, to be precise—we went to visit the far-famed Sadhu Vaswaniji at his Mira School. The vast hall was packed with Vaswaniji's devotees who sang their welcome to Papa. Then Vaswaniji stepped in and embraced Papa tenderly. The sight of the two saints greeting each other thus made all hearts heave, for it was, indeed, a beautiful sight and reminded us of two holy rivers meeting to form an even holier confluence: each melts into the other and yet preserves its distinctive individuality.

Sadhu Vaswani spoke of Papa's love, Papa returned the compliment by speaking of Vaswaniji's compassion for all and, lastly, I spoke at some length of the blessedness of such a meeting of saints and how saints fulfilled their divine mission through love and living what they preached. India is India because her soil is favourable to the growth of saints. Sri Aurobindo was surely right when he wrote: "The hero, the rishi, the saint, are the natural fruits of our Indian soil and there has been no age in which they have not been born."

Dawned March 1st. Papa and Mataji would leave us tomorrow—was the sad thought that visited each of us as we sang in chorus our welcome song to them composed by Indira Devi in Hindi.

वन्दना लो रामदास ! वन्दना लो मेरी ।
बालरूप ! है अनूप प्रीत रीत तेरी ।
नामरतन तरसे प्यासे जगको देने आया ।
ओं श्रीराम जै राम जै जै राम गाया ॥१॥

कौन राजा, कौन दास, कौन पर है बोलो ।
बैरीमीत सब में राम प्रेम—नैन खोलो ।
जीव जन्तु जल में थल में राम है समाया ।
ओं श्रीराम जै राम जै जै राम गाया ॥२॥

धन्य धरणि चरण तेरे हृदय से लगाई ।
धन्य प्रेमि आज तेरे धन्य कृष्णाबाई ।
राम बना रामदास खेल है रचाया ।
ओं श्रीराम जै राम जै जै राम गाया ॥३॥

which I translated so that it may be sung in the same tune :

We bow to thee, O Ramdas, great saint, we bow to thee :
 O peerless child, whose love outflowers in pure simplicity !
 Thou com'st to bless our arid earth with His Name's rain of Grace
 And chantest : "Ram ! I sing thy glory in deep gratefulness."
 "Who's a king and who's a bondsman ? Who's an alien, say ?
 Behold with the eye of love ; in friend and foe—'tis He would play !
 On land and sea 'tis He who reigns !

All live by His breath of Grace,

And so O Ram ! I sing thy glory in deep gratefulness."
 Touching thy feet the earth is blessed, O Ram's darling son !
 Blessed Krishnabai and those who have seen in thee the One
 And known that through Ramdas comes Ram to serve
and sport in Grace
 And chants : "O Ram ! I sing thy glory in deep gratefulness."

As we sang this song a great many wondered how this great saint could make them all love him so naturally and spontaneously as though they had known him for ages ! Was it not simply because he is so spontaneous and natural himself and as such can do away with all ceremonies which make for aloofness and awe ? But then why analyse the mystery of love and saintliness ? Let us claim the Lover with the response of love and sing with him the Lord's glory "in deep gratefulness."

Probably Papa had felt this response at the time we were singing his paeon ; for he said after we had come to an end, looking at Indira and myself : "You two have created here a nucleus of love, for Ramdas feels the vibration of love at every turn from the devotees you have attracted."

I felt a heave in my heart. "We have little else to offer Papa. All we have is love. We are but two drops—"

"Not drops," Papa cut in, "you have dug a vast lake of love here which is so inviting and cool that Ramdas has grown hoarse, don't you see, dipping into it again and again." And he laughed. (The context is : Papa had grown hoarse answering our questions morning and evening for hours. So he made light of it by assuring us that it was all because he had taken too much curd !)

Then I made bold to put a last question.

"Papa," I said, "would you mind telling us about your final realisation which they call vishvarupa darshan ?"

Papa instantly acquiesced and gave a long detailed description of his burning aspiration and yearning which led him to Arunachala Hill hallowed by the tapasya of the peerless saint, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. I can only give here the gist of his long narration.

Papa said : "Before Ramdas left Mangalore on his wandering life it was usual with him to sit up the whole night chanting God's name. One night when he was thus engaged in the repetition of Ramnam he saw suddenly Lord Krishna dancing before him. Krishna had a flute in hand, a gold crown on His head, a fine tilak on His forehead, a long garland of flowers around His neck and He was wearing a yellow silk cloth. This vision captivated Ramdas's heart and he was for a few seconds witnessing the dance. It was a thrilling experience. He was very much delighted to have the vision of Krishna in that particular form, but his desire all along was to see Him as everybody, as everything in the entire universe. So at that moment he intensely wished and prayed that Krishna should grant him His universal vision and not put him off by giving His darshan in that form. Ramdas knew well that all those forms were impermanent, and when once they appeared they would disappear. He would be satisfied only with a permanent vision."

"Did you see him with closed eyes or open?" I interjected. "With open eyes as Ramdas is seeing you," answered Papa. He continued: "A few days after the vision, in a mysterious way, Ramdas was led to Tiruvannamalai and a sadhu took him for the darshan of Ramana Maharshi. Ramdas stood before the Maharshi and addressed him thus : 'Maharaj, here stands before thee a humble slave. Have pity on him. His only prayer to thee is to give him thy blessings.' The Maharshi, turning his beautiful eyes towards Ramdas and looking intently for a few minutes into his eyes as though he was pouring into Ramdas his blessings through those orbs, shook his head to say that he had blessed. A thrill of inexpressible joy coursed through the frame of Ramdas. Now at the prompting of Ram, Ramdas desired to spend some time in solitude. The sadhuram then took him to a solitary cave in the Arunachala hill. Throughout his stay there he was spending the day and night without a wink of sleep in the incessant repetition of Ramnam. He ate very little food. He went out in the morning to beg and came back to boil the pot of rice—just rice—which he shared with the squirrels who were his only companions in the cave. After twenty days when he came out of the cave he was blessed with universal vision for which he was longing. He saw the Lord everywhere—in the trees, in the stone, in the grass, in the earth ; in the ground and in all directions. The divine light was pervading and vibrating. He felt thrills of ecstasy coursing through his entire frame and he was running about like a mad man to embrace everything that he could hold on. He went to the trees and embraced them. He went to the rocks and embraced them. A man was passing that way. Ramdas ran up to him and embraced him also, because he saw his Beloved in everybody. The man was frightened and was about to run away. But Ramdas caught him and talked to him very sweetly and then the man understood that Ramdas was not after all mad, and noted that Ramdas had not a tooth in his mouth and so felt a little assured that at least Ramdas would not be able to bite him." He laughed out and we echoed in chorus.

"And then ?" I asked, after the laughter had subsided. Papa said : "The bliss and joy came to be permanent, like a torrent rushing downhill till it finds a placid level of limpid eversinging stream. This experience is called sahaja samadhi in which you can never be cut off from the consciousness of being at one with the One who has become all, in which you feel you are one with all because you have perceived that all is He."

The room throbbed as though with a holy Presence. And I loved Ramdas that he could talk thus to us all so naturally of the only thing that is worth talking about. But alas, we talk on of this and that frittering away our precious energy having nothing better to talk (or hear) about. Our homage to this great child of Ram, who has never grown, thank God, so that we can hear at one remove the flute he has heard and behold in all the One-in-all he has visioned !

And that is why he can win our hearts at once, because he can make us feel the thrill he has felt of the Supreme Contact.

One last word. Papa told us that he had assured the Westerners that there would be no Third World War. After he had left I wrote to him asking whether it was a personal opinion he had expressed or a revelation given to him by Ram. He wrote back a loving letter in answer with which I will end this humble tribute to the great God-lover.

"Beloved Ram", he wrote, "Ramdas did assure the Westerners that there would be no Third World War. This he said as inspired by Ram. You may take it as a revelation.

"It is not only that you enjoyed our stay with you, but we too had an overwhelmingly blissful time in the company of yourself and Indira Devi, bathing in the holy atmosphere of your Hari Krishna Mandir. The days we spent with you are really unforgettable. Ever your Self, Ramdas."

When he left our ashram I was reminded again and again of a famous saying of Acharya Shankar :

"The liberated soul lives only to serve others."

—Dilip Kumar Roy.

Anandashram, August 17, 1957

548.
**Vinobaji's
visit**

It was indeed a blissful day for all in the ashram. The meeting of the two saints was a most elevating event. It had been a rare privilege to witness Papa meet many saints in India and abroad ; but this was the most memorable of them all.

Papa had invited Vinobaji to visit Anandashram on his way from Cannanore to Mangalore. After a while we were happy to get a letter from his camp in Calicut that he would halt for a day in Anandashram.

Vinobaji was scheduled to arrive at the ashram at 7-30 a.m. It began as a bright morning and the ashramites were busy adding final touches to the decorations made on a small scale to receive the distinguished guest. Papa was ready to receive Vinobaji as early as 6-30. In his eagerness, Papa could not stay within the ashram. He came out and was standing at the head of the steps leading to the bhajan-hall, looking towards the gate for the saint who was to arrive only after an hour. Somebody got a chair for him on which Papa sat facing the gate. An hour was obviously too long for such waiting. Suddenly the weather changed. Dark clouds gathered and soon it was raining heavily. Papa was thus forced to go back to the ashram and sit in the portico.

News soon came that Vinobaji was nearing the ashram. Due to the heavy downpour it was impossible to receive him at the gate. So Papa walked up to the guest-house where Vinobaji was to stay, in order to receive him there. In a few minutes, just before 8, protected from the heavy rain by a simple country-made, palm-leaf umbrella and followed by about a hundred people, Vinobaji entered the ashram compound and walked up towards the guest-house by the neat little road that Mataji had newly got laid from the ashram main road. As soon as he entered the house, Papa greeted him with his beaming smile and garlanded him. Both embraced each other warmly. They then entered the adjacent hall and sat on an asan on the floor and had a hearty chat for a few minutes during which Vinobaji recalled their first meeting at Paunar ashram about six years ago. Their failure to meet each other all those years, he compared to the inability of the two eyes of the face to see each other in spite of their close proximity. On a devotee remarking that the meeting of saints was a great occasion for rejoicing, Papa observed, "Ramdas is no saint, but a simple child of all saints." This drew out from Vinobaji the words that he was only a sudra, who loved to serve everyone. What a wonderful example of humility saints set to us!

After the brief, pleasant chat Papa left Vinobaji to attend to his morning routine. Half an hour later Mataji went to the guest-house to make pranams to Vinobaji. She spent some time with him talking in Marathi. Just after 10-30 Vinobaji and party came to the ashram bhajan-hall, where many visitors also were present. He and Papa sat together on an asan laid on the floor and Vinobaji's daily programme of the reading of Tulsidas *Ramayan* went on for about half an hour. The recital in which all the members of his party joined was very sweet and impressive.

Between 2 and 2-30 p.m. the members of Vinobaji's party came to the bhajan-hall to meet Papa. In response to their request Papa spoke as follows :—

"You all know everything. What is there that Ramdas can tell you? You are in the company of a great mahatma who has been teaching you from day-to-day what you

should do, what you should not do and what should be the basis of your life. So Ramdas has nothing new to say.

"The basis of life must be self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice should be there if you want to be useful to society, to the community, to the nation, to the country and to the world at large. Self-sacrifice is possible only when we think of God constantly. By constant God-remembrance our ego will be put down. If we work without putting down the ego-sense, we shall be doing things ostensibly for the good of others, but really for our own self-adulation. So the basis of our life should be God. He will be at our back when we remember Him constantly and do all things in His name and for His sake. God-thought must never be absent from our mind. All other thoughts must be kept away. Then our life will flow spontaneously for the good of others, and in the good of others we shall find the good of ourselves.

"It is said rightly that in the happiness of others lies our own happiness. The world thinks otherwise. We think by exploiting others we can be happy. This is false. Only by trying to be useful to others, by sacrificing our own interest for their sake we can find true happiness. The mother toils and moils for the sake of her child. She finds happiness in such a life although she undergoes great difficulties and hardship. She sacrifices food and sleep and still she is happy because she is doing all these for the sake of her child, out of love for the child. So also, if you do things with love in your heart and undergo sufferings for the sake of others, you will feel immensely happy. Self-sacrifice is however not possible unless you tune your mind to God within you. Whatever be the work you are engaged in for the good of humanity, God-thought must be always present in you. Then your life becomes blessed all round.

"Ramdas's humble suggestion to you all is that you should remember God constantly and then do your work. Whatever great work you do in that spirit will help you to put down your ego and the sense of pride that springs from it. Thus you become true servants of God. You will then not arrogate to yourselves anything great or good. If anybody praises you for any work done, you will say and feel that all praise should go to God as it is He who makes you do everything. Now you will be happy and make others also happy.

"Again Ramdas comes to the burden of the song as it were, that God remembrance should be the basis of your life. The great work in which you are engaged under the leadership of Sri Vinobaji will bear abundant fruit. It is bearing fruit already because you have a leader who is a great devotee, whose life is spiritually enlightened. In his company you are elevated and inspired. You must take him as a great example and work up your life to the ideal which he has placed before you. So Ramdas's message to all of you is that you should not forget God at any time. Let His remembrance be the substratum of your active life. What more can Ramdas tell you? What little he knows he has told you."

Vinobaji and party came once more to the bhajan-hall at 3 p.m. This meeting was arranged in response to the insistent request of some of the devotees to see and hear the two saints. Papa began by conveying to the distinguished visitor the desire of the devotees that he should speak to them a few words on some spiritual subject. Vinobaji then spoke as follows :—

“I shall speak slowly in Hindi. I have not come to this place to give a speech. If I had come to speak I would have stayed in the town. Here I have come to get influenced. You all know that my pada-yatra has been going on for the last six and a half years during which I gained many experiences and contacted many people. I forget many faces, but I remember the form of God.

“I sometimes come across such places as this also. Recently, I went to Pondicherry. I could not go there before that, when Aurobindo Ghosh was living. I spent thirty years when I was young, in chintan, manan and service. If Gandhiji were alive today, I would have continued that sort of work and never started on this walking tour. In that work I had entire satisfaction in those days and today in this work also I have that satisfaction. I have studied Aurobindo Ghosh's works from my early days, but I could not contact him or see him in his ashram. I saw him in Baroda in my childhood and after he had dropped his body I went to Pondicherry during this yatra. Where great men have lived, the atmosphere has its own sanctity even after they have dropped their bodies. I was happy to see Pondicherry. They wished that I should tell them something. There also I went only to be influenced and I did get influenced. Now I have come here.

“I was not sure of coming here because I am in the hands of the organisers of bhoodan. Wherever they want to take me for some work, there I go. Therefore it was not sure whether I should go from Tellicherry to Mysore, or go to Mangalore and thence to Mysore. In the end we were prompted by God to go *via* Mangalore which made this visit here possible. I too desired to go *via* Mangalore, but left it to the workers of Kerala. From here I had received an invitation also to visit this ashram. But I did not write a reply that I could come, because I did not know. By God's will I have come here and I am very happy.

“I do not much discuss spiritual matters and I do not believe in such discussions. In worldly matters discussions may be necessary and possible, but not in spiritual subjects where we can enjoy only the *rasa*, the essence. Here one can give benefit to others and be benefited also. Those who can give, give ; but while giving they do not even feel that they are giving. The real giver is God. That is how I feel. He gives the blessings, He takes various forms. He takes even the form of stone. He takes any form, big or small, and gives wisdom. He makes man an instrument to impart spiritual advice. If our mind is ready to receive the influence, we will be able to receive it. Here I have come with full faith and with an open

heart. Mine is not, what is called, a critical attitude. That type of attitude also I can have. But it should be considered where I should have that and where I should not have that. I do not keep that critical attitude here and I have kept it in its proper place. Therefore I have come to know from you and would like to have your suggestions.

"I am engaged in a great work for the people. I still remember the day when I received the first bhoodan of one hundred acres of land at Telengana. That night I thought and thought of what had happened. Was it God's will? I got the message from within that it was God's will and if I should not feel it so, I would be unwise. I was forced from within to accept it. I was very calculative. So that night I calculated how much land would be required if everybody in India was to be given land. I found that five crores of acres of land would be necessary. How should I set about that work? Was it possible? I doubted. If I had taken up the work on my own, it would have been a failure. But I relied on God and His voice within me and started the work. I feel it is God's work.

"This is the place of God's devotees. From here I want advice and strength which are absolutely necessary for me. To get that from you I have come here. In that spirit, whatever you say I shall hear."

Papa then spoke :

"Ramdas may be excused for his inability to speak in Malayalam so fluently and correctly as to make you all understand what he has to say. So he will take the liberty of speaking to you in English. Sri Vinobaji has given us in a few words the highest wisdom with regard not only to the material side of life, but also the spiritual. So Ramdas does not know what he has to say more than what he has already said. Ramdas's life for about thirtythree years now has been moulded differently along the spiritual line. He was at one time a great adherent of Mahatma Gandhi and had taken active part in the Congress work especially during the non-cooperation days. Later on God willed that he should live a life dedicated only to Him and spread the glory of His great name. To fulfil this object it was that Ramdas was freed from all activities of normal life. He was taken over by Him and made to go to so many places in India.

"First Ramdas was made to take the Name for himself continuously and enjoy its sweetness. God's name is his mainstay; his sole mission in life is to sing the glories of the name and make as many people as possible utter the Name, because, unless a man has got the spiritual background, his actions do not fulfil themselves in doing good to people. So Ramdas was directed by the divine within that he should first purify his life by constant remembrance of God and then dedicate all actions to

Him. But dedication is possible only when we are free from the ego-sense, that is when we feel that we are merely servants of God. This attitude we can maintain by remembering Him constantly.

“Remembrance is called smaran. This smaran comes by taking His holy name constantly. His holy name is as sweet as nectar. It is like a nectarine pill. Like a lozenge, when you put it on your tongue, you taste its sweetness; its sweetness flows continuously.

“So Ramdas’s experience by the repetition of the Name was that his mind was filled with divine bliss. It was not only purified and enlightened, but it was also sweetened. That sweetness entered into every part of his being and he realised that he was the very embodiment of bliss. This experience completely purifies you and you behold the divine everywhere and then you cannot but love everybody irrespective of any distinction on the surface. Likes and dislikes leave you completely and the divine energy in you flows out spontaneously for the good of everybody just as the sun gives light. If you ask the sun why it is giving light and if it could speak, it would say that it is its nature to give light. So also it becomes our nature to be active in the world for the good of others. Unless we find joy within ourselves we cannot do real good to others. So long as we are discontented within and our minds are impure and are craving for the things of the world, we are steeped in ignorance. If we are contented and happy, our actions will flow out of us spontaneously and prove to be beneficial to all those with whom we come into contact.

“In this spirit Sri Vinobaji has undertaken this great tour in which he is collecting crores of acres of land so that all can possess and enjoy them and live in freedom and happiness. Man, when he is serving another as an employee, is a degraded creature. He must stand on his own legs, cultivate his own land and then live a life which is independent, and co-operate with others so that others also may derive the benefit of his labour and thereby make a happy society, a happy community, a happy nation and a happy world. This is the great mission which God has entrusted Vinobaji with and he is successfully carrying it out. We can see all this from his life of perfect abstinence and dedication, with the background of a divine consciousness.

“Gandhiji was also a great saint first and a karma yogi next. His life was spotlessly pure because he had great faith in Ramnam and Ramnam did thoroughly purify his life and through such pure life it is that the divine energy poured out of him for the uplift of humanity. So the inspired personality who is in our midst here is a great example which everybody should follow.

“Ramdas a few minutes ago had talked to you on this very subject. He said that we must have a spiritual background to our life. We must through constant remembrance of God develop the awareness of the Self, the divine consciousness.

Smaran or remembrance will continue so long as duality persists. There is then the feeling of devotee and God. When this sense of duality disappears we realise that we and He are not different. Then the remembrance as such disappears and we attain a divine consciousness which is the basis of our life. Then it is that we will be really doing good to others. We will then dedicate our lives to the good of others and we will offer everything we have for their uplift and happiness. Sri Vinobaji's mission is to make everybody happy and stand on his own feet. Such a society we have to form in India. The message of the rishis is that everyone is the supreme Brahman. Let us realise this truth and be fearless and live and move with others in a spirit of equality, mutual help, co-operation and thereby contribute towards the harmony in the life of humanity as a whole.

"Today we must feel we are blessed that in our midst we have a great personality who is honoured all over the world. It is not India alone that honours him. We find in all other parts of the world his name has become a household word. So we must feel proud that he is with us today and we have to take lessons from him. The few words that he spoke to us can be taken by us as a message coming from the most high and we must try to work out in our lives the simple truths that he has placed before us so that our lives may become blessed. These are the few words Ramdas speaks in gratitude for his visit to us. We feel supremely blessed by his visit."

After the meeting Vinobaji was taken by Mataji round the ashram to see the office, the library, the Ramnam mandir, the publication department, the dining-hall and the go-shala. Vinobaji was much impressed on seeing in the Ramnam Mandir ten big almirahs filled with Ramnam note-books, some of which were taken out and shown to him.

The prayer meeting in the evening was arranged in the open space in front of the bhajan-hall. Vinobaji and Papa sat on a platform at the top of the steps, between the cement benches, and the audience, about a thousand strong, sat on the ground. In the evening the sky became clear enough to permit the public meeting to go on uninterrupted.

After the meeting, Vinobaji and a few others went up the hill behind the ashram and sat for some time there surveying the beautiful scenery all round. After walking eight miles in the early hours of the morning and going through a heavy programme of meetings and interviews during the day, it was wonderful that he found enough strength to walk up the hill like a young man. He retired to bed early at 8 p.m.

The lights were on again at 3 a.m. At 4 the usual prayer was held at Vinobaji's residence. The whole of the *Isavasya Upanishad* and some songs were sung by the members of the party. Mataji and other ashramites also attended the prayer. Before the prayer started, Mataji offered Vinobaji the cup of cow's milk she had brought

and he gladly accepted it. Exactly at 4-30 Vinobaji resumed his pada-yatra to the next halt at Peria about six miles from the ashram. Mataji and a large number of ashramites accompanied him some distance and took their leave.

September 17, 1957

549. **Mai Swarup's visit** Sri Mai Swarup Mai Markhand was, as the name indicated, a Mother-worshipper. He stayed at Mai Nivas, in Santa Cruz, Bombay, and had a number of devotees spread over various parts of the country. He had a programme at Trichur, whither he was going from Bombay, via Mangalore. Papa, coming to know of Mai Swarup's intended visit to Trichur had sent a loving invitation to him the previous month to visit Anandashram on his way to Trichur.

Mai Swarup arrived at the ashram with two of his women devotees and his Trichur host and hostess who had gone to Mangalore to receive him. Papa, along with a large number of ashramites and other devotees, was waiting under the banyan tree in front of the steps that led to the ashram bhajan-hall. As soon as Maiji got down from the car, Papa received him with a warm embrace. The faces of both the saints beamed with smiles. They were indeed blessed who witnessed the scene.

Papa then escorted Maiji to the beautifully decorated guest-house walking hand in hand, followed by devotees. At the entrance to the guest-house, Brahmachari Subbaram was waiting with two garlands. When Papa and Maiji entered, he garlanded Maiji first and then Papa. Maiji then told Subbaram that he ought to have garlanded Papa first and then him, and quoted the couplet, 'Guru Govinda...' Subbaram made no answer, but took both to the hall inside. Continuing, Maiji said that Subbaram was right as the Guru considered the guest to be greater than himself and therefore would be pleased if his guest was honoured first. Papa laughed in agreement saying: "Atithi Devo Bhava!"

Both sat on one cot. The ashramites paid their respects to the venerable guest, prostrating before him. They then took their seats on the carpet spread on the floor. After a short while Mataji came in, made pranams to Maiji, touching his feet, and enquired what he and his party would like to have. On being told they would have tea, she hurried back to the kitchen and brought the refreshments. Meanwhile, Papa and Maiji were having a merry talk about their previous meeting in Bombay and other topics. Maiji presented to Papa some of his recently published books. Refreshments over, Papa left Maiji and came away.

Mai Markhand, who was about the same age as Papa, was a well-built figure with short grey hair. He was simple like a child, very active and wore a toothless smile.

Maiji came to the bhajan-hall at the time of the evening bhajan. He and Papa sat together on a long asan provided for the occasion. He greatly enjoyed the bhajan, his eyes swimming in tears.

September 18, 1957

8-30 a.m. After dealing with the correspondence, Papa went to the guest-house to sit for a while with Maiji. Devotees came one by one and took their seats in front of the saints. Maiji talked mostly to the devotees, telling them how the Divine Mother took care of them if they surrendered their all to Her. He narrated his own experiences and extolled the path of devotion which, he said, was comparatively easier and sweeter than other paths. A devotee had only to call the Mother and cry to Her for whatever he wanted and the Mother would give it. In the other paths, the sadhakas depended upon their own efforts and so found the path hard. His talks, largely based on his personal experiences, were very inspiring. He described how he enjoyed his stay at the ashram, how the ashram atmosphere was pure and peaceful, and how everything was done there naturally, spontaneously, without any artificiality. He said he was not praising the ashram but was giving the results of his observation like a laboratory analyst. He repeatedly stressed the value of satsang which never went in vain, and ultimately took the devotee to God.

In the course of his talks Papa asked Maiji his age. Instead of giving a direct reply, he asked Papa: "Papa, do you want my real age or false age?"

Papa: "You may say you are eternal. But what Ramdas wants to know is how old this body is."

Mai Swarup: "If that is so, the answer is seventytwo years."

Papa: "Ah! Then you are younger than Ramdas."

Mai Swarup: "Probably it is so. I was born in December 1885."

Papa: "Ramdas was born in April 1884."

Mai Swarup: "Yes, God sent one to the world for some great work and, after some time sent another. Being born so close, we may say we both are of the same age."

Papa: "So we can be twins."

Mai Swarup: "Yes, we are twins."

Papa: "Someone told Ramdas that you are seventysix or seventynine years old."

Mai Swarup : "So you invited me here thinking that I am older than you, and if you knew I am younger, perhaps you would not have invited me !"

Papa replied that the invitation did not depend on his age. Everybody had a hearty laugh at the childlike way the talks were going on.

It was nearing 10-30 a.m. Papa got up saying it was time for bath. He asked Mai Swarup to be ready to come to the dining hall to give the ashramites the pleasure of his company during lunch. Mai Swarup did not usually take the midday meal. But when Papa requested him to come and at least sit with him, he agreed. He added that he would not sit quiet, that he might be served the dishes in small quantities and he would take a little if he felt like doing so. Accordingly, at 11-30 a.m. Papa and Maiji sat together in the dining-hall with the devotees. After the meal, the two retired for rest.

On the way back to the guest-house, Maiji was shown some of the rooms in Lalitha Devi building. After seeing them he came out saying he would have liked to enter all the rooms. He observed that, whenever he passed by any temple of the Mother, his experience was that, unless he got down and had Her darshan, he would not be able to go forward without some accident or other. Therefore, he said, he never failed to visit all the temples of the Mother on his way. Returning to the guest-house, he stretched himself on the cot for a few minutes. Some ashramites who accompanied him sat on the floor. They were waiting for him to get up after his rest in order to take him to the bhajan-hall before his departure. While resting, Mai Swarup suddenly asked those near him : "Who is singing?" There was nobody singing. So a negative reply was given. Maiji again said that he was hearing some fine music in Kannada tune and wanted to make sure if anybody was singing in the vicinity. There was none. Mai Swarup then said that it was not the first time he heard music like that. He had similar experiences before when he heard music coming from apparently nowhere. He sat up and sang the tune he heard.

As it was time to start, Mai Swarup came to the bhajan-hall where Papa was waiting for him. They were garlanded by Subbaram and Chandrasekharan. Mataji and the devotees then paid their respects to the saints. It was then time for Mai Swarup's departure. He got up and embraced the devotees present in the hall. That loving gesture gave them no small joy. Papa, Mai Swarup and Mataji walked down together to the waiting car. Before Mai Swarup entered the car Papa closed his arms round him and gave him a warm embrace. Mai Swarup's eyes were filled with tears of joy. A blessed and touching sight indeed !

The party left at 12-30 p.m. Papa was waving his hand and in a few seconds the car was out of sight.

LIII

Anandashram, September 22, 1957

560. An American lady, Mrs. Frances Cassard had been in the ashram
Mataji on for the past few days. In the afternoon when Mataji was on her
sadhana usual rounds, Mrs. Cassard saw her and called her in. The following
 conversation ensued.

F.C.: "Can we attain God-realisation living in our own houses and doing the normal household or other duties?"

Mataji: "Yes, it is possible for you. But you must have intense aspiration to realise God and you must work hard to reach the goal."

F.C.: "I was reading Mataji's life-sketch and I was particularly interested to read that portion relating to your leaving your two sons.... Why had you to come away from them?"

Mataji: "I did not really come away from them. My coming from there to the ashram was like my moving in my own house from one room to another. Papa had prepared my mind to such an extent that I found no difference between home and the world. When a person has reached such a stage, it does not matter where he lives and works."

F.C.: "Does Mataji also say that one should not leave home for the purpose of doing spiritual practices?"

Mataji: "It will be better if one remains at home and does sadhana. There are many dangers for one outside the house."

F.C.: "You said that you were feeling only as if going from one room to another when you came away to the ashram. May I ask why it was necessary for you to come out of that room (your home) at all?"

Mataji: "Nobody can stay in one room all through life. Unless he is sick, he will move out into all the rooms for his work. Perhaps it was not clear when I gave the example of the rooms. Let me explain. Suppose I have a house consisting of

four or five rooms. I consider that that small house alone belongs to me and nothing else. If my vision expands, I will be able to accept the whole universe as my own. Instead of the small house remaining as my only possession, the universe now becomes mine. So, going from one place to another in the world, which I have realised as my own, is only like going from one room of my house to another."

F.C.: "Should we have some symbols like pictures, images, and so on for worship?"

Mataji: "The use of external forms will give you only very little help to advance on the path. You have to go beyond all external forms of worship. I shall explain to you what Papa taught me."

F.C.: "My students in Japan sometimes feel that I might have had high spiritual experiences. Their condition at present is very bad as they are just recovering from the effects of the war. They have to find suitable jobs, earn money to look after their aged parents and other dependents. They also want to know something about God. What should I tell them?"

Mataji: "Except for certain fundamentals, spiritual instructions to individuals vary according to their nature and temperament. Each one requires specific instructions based of course, on the fundamental principles. You see here we serve rice for all as a common item of food. Other preparations that are added to rice vary according to individual tastes. So also in regard to spiritual life, certain general instructions will be common. I can tell you about such general instructions only. Repetition of Ramnam, God's name, is the one discipline applicable to all in general. It must be noted that nothing can be achieved without effort and concentration. If one has to pass an examination on certain subjects he has to study well, concentrate his mind and all his energy on such study. If one wants to prepare some good food, there also concentration and application to the work are necessary. Therefore it follows that those who have the aspiration to realise God must put their heart and soul into their effort to attain their goal, and do all actions as His worship."

F.C.: "In repeating God's name there is one difficulty. Buddhists call on Buddha, muslims on Mohammed, christians on Christ. These prophets are taken to be the manifestations of God, the supreme Being. They may repeat the name of Buddha, Mohammed or Christ, but do you think it would be better to repeat the name of God, instead of these manifestations of God? What should they do?"

Mataji: "By 'Ramnam' I do not mean any particular name; I mean only the name of God. Followers of different faiths may take the names of the masters or incarnations they worship. God is the supreme Being who is unmanifest and also manifest. His manifestation is everything that is seen, heard, felt, thought of and

so on. He is at the same time beyond all manifestations. God and His manifestations are one. If you repeat the name of the manifestation, it is as good as repeating the name of God. But you must bear in mind that what you repeat is not the name of a mere person, but of one who is the manifestation of God, nay, of God Himself."

F.C.: "How am I to tell all these to my students? They may not understand."

Mataji: "What do you teach to a small child? You first make it understand the names of its limbs—legs, hands and so forth. To the grown-up child you give advanced lessons. So also for those who have not studied the fundamentals of spiritual life, you have to give lessons on the rudiments, from the very beginning. You may ask them to take to the repetition of the name of God. By such repetition they will gradually progress on the path and get higher experiences for themselves. You do not thrust upon lower class students all that you have studied at college. You tell them what they can understand at their level. Gradually, they will be able to grasp all that you have to teach. This principle applies to spiritual instructions as well.

"When you have the experience that you are a universal being, the problem of teaching 'another' does not really arise. Then whatever you do is for yourself and not for 'another', because the so-called 'another' also is yourself. You touch your head while dressing your hair and you touch any other part of your body whenever an occasion demands it. Whatever part of the body you touch, you feel you are touching only yourself. So also when you teach, help or serve others, you will feel that you are teaching, helping or serving yourself. In the experience of the universal, the sense of 'other' goes. It is immaterial then whether you engage yourself in work or not. You will be acting in the natural course as you attend now to the needs of your body. When you feel thirsty you drink water. The same spontaneity will mark your attitude in regard to all activities."

F.C.: "I have been having a very happy time here. I have to leave soon, as I should reach Tokyo next week. I would have loved to stay here longer. I will be in Tokyo for another two years. After that I do not know what I will be doing. But I like to be in India. Anyway, on my way back from Japan, I will visit India again."

Mataji: "Then you can spend more time here. Now, as you are in a hurry, it would be better that you go to Tokyo and think there of Papa, than stay here and think of your work in Tokyo. Further do not make any distinction between India and other countries."

F.C.: "Do you mean to say that I should stay in Tokyo, sit in a room, close my eyes and feel that I am in the ashram here in India?"

Mataji : "That is not what I mean. When your mind is drawn inward, you do not feel concerned as to which part of the world you live in and work, because then you find the whole world as one unit. It is all the same for you wherever you live and work."

September 29, 1957

551. It was past 8 a.m. Papa was already seated under the banyan tree. **Farewells** Achint Ram, who had been sitting for a long time in the bhajan-hall, came to Papa along with S. and two others. He could not sit long with Papa that day as it was time for his departure. He offered a five-rupee note to Papa, saying, "This is guru-dakshina from my father." Papa accepted it saying : "Yes, your father used to send this amount regularly."

Achint Ram : "My father will be happy to know that I have come here. As soon as I return home and tell him of my visit here, he would surely ask me if I had paid the guru-dakshina. My father is very old now. His memory also fails him at times. My prayer is that I should not see him suffering."

Papa : "It is painful to see him suffering."

Achint Ram : "You told me everything yesterday. The trouble with me is this. I understand aright everything, I understand philosophy all right, but it is purely an intellectual grasp. It is not any deeper."

Papa : "It must develop into experience. By constantly thinking and meditating upon the Truth, you experience it. You have to experience Satchidananda."

Achint Ram : "Satchidananda is sitting here."

Papa (*laughing*) : "That is a nice joke ! But you see Satchidananda outside. You have to see Him within."

Achint Ram, after a few more minutes' conversation about his connection with the Swami of Dayalbagh, asked if Papa had any objection to his repeating any mantra other than Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram.

Papa : "All mantras are equally powerful."

As Achint Ram wanted to see the office and goshala, Papa suggested that he might be shown round. S. took him to the office and goshala. When they returned, the car was ready.

Papa : "Now you must go. It is time. You could not see the houses built by the ashram for the workers."

Achint Ram : "I wanted to see them. I wish every worker gets two acres of land and a house."

S : "I shall show him the house which is under construction near the S.K. Vidyalaya. He can get an idea."

Papa : "Yes, that will be all right. Then you may also get into the car."

Achint Ram : "I am now leaving. I shall be writing some time."

Papa : "Ramdas has stopped all correspondence. But Satchidanand will reply on Ramdas's behalf."

Achint Ram : "That is all right. Now may I take my leave?"

S. also went with him up to the Vidyalaya compound where they stopped for a while to see the house for Savitri Amma, under construction. Achint Ram was much impressed with the plan of the house and area of the compound behind the house. He wished that similar houses could be provided for all workers. He was working in the Bhoodan movement and was happy to see that the ashram had already started the scheme.

September 30, 1957

As usual, after 8-30 a.m. Papa and S. were sitting under the banyan tree. Sundaram, his wife and daughters were coming from the bhajan-hall to spend some time with Papa as they were to go back to Aruvankadu that evening. Seeing them coming, Papa remarked in a tone loud enough to be heard by Sundaram : "The cock, hen and the chicks have come. Come on, sit down."

Sundaram laughed and said : "In various bright colours, pancha varna." All the daughters, Sundaram and his wife prostrated before Papa and sat down on the mat.

Sundaram : "We have to leave this evening."

Papa : "Who is going and who is coming? You are really not going or coming. Going and coming relate only to the body. Why do you identify yourself with the perishable body? You are the eternal, infinite, changeless Brahman. Identify yourself with That—with your Krishna."

Sundaram : "However much I may try to identify myself with my true Being, the mind sometimes wants to dwell on the perishable."

Papa : "You should not allow it to do that. You are not the mind; you are not the body; you are the Supreme Brahman, who neither goes nor comes."

Just then a sadhu came near Papa and bowed before him.

Papa : "Where are you coming from ?"

Sadhu : "I am now coming from Nileshtar."

Papa : "What have you come for ? Go in."

Sadhu : "Please teach me bhakti."

Papa : "Ramdas knows only to eat and sleep. He does not know bhakti. How can he teach you ?"

The sadhu was aghast. He stood for awhile.

Papa : "If you want to learn bhakti you may go to the bhajan-hall there and sit, listening to the Ramnam dhun going on."

The sadhu went to the bhajan-hall.

October 3, 1957

552. 10 p.m. Papa's room. Papa was resting. The lights were off.
Visitors Mataji was sitting near Papa's cot writing Ramnam, with a hurricane
expected lantern before her. Motiben was sitting by Mataji. Gopal was busy
with some small items of work.

In the evening Papa received a letter from Ramjee Arjun, a devotee in Coimbatore, saying that Sadhu Bhandasji of Kutch proposed to visit the ashram and that he would also accompany him either the next day or the day after. There was also another letter from Yogacharya Mildred Hamilton of Seattle, U.S.A., that she and her husband, Rev. Ralph B. Hamilton would be landing at Trichy on the 13th and would be reaching the ashram on the 14th. They had taken visa for a stay of about a year in India.

Papa (to Mataji) : "A swami is coming from Coimbatore tomorrow or the day after. He is from Kutch. It is a great privilege to us that great mahatmas have been gracious enough to come and stay with us. Vinobaji came ; and again last month Mai Swarup came. This month Bhandasji is coming. We have requested Swami Omkar also to come. What a happy thing to receive and serve saints ! Swami Siddhananda, who came from Palghat, also writes that he so much likes this ashram, that he goes on telling all his friends about the ashram, and himself wishes to come here as soon as possible. But the beauty is that those who are here wish to go to other places ! What does it mean ?"

Mataji only smiled, but did not give any reply.

S : "Papa, it seems Vinobaji is very happy that he came here. In his talks during the big conference near Mysore, he was referring to his visit here."

Papa : "Is that so ? Our Mai Swarup also felt very happy when he came. He may also tell his friends that he enjoyed his visit here. So the name of our ashram is spreading ! (to Mataji) : The Hamiltons are also coming soon. Do you know what they told the press reporter before they left Seattle ?"

Mataji : "What ?"

Papa : "They told him they were going to India to see a great saint, a rishi, in Anandashram. It seems that saint is the greatest living saint in South India, nay, India or the whole world. Is it true ?"

Mataji simply laughed.

Papa : "Gopal, do you know him ? It seems he is here. Can you find him out?"

All had a good laugh. Gopal had by that time finished his work and was sitting near Papa's cot. He did not say anything.

Papa : "When such things are told by others, Gopal's admiration for Ramdas increases. He then thinks that when all these people talk so highly of Ramdas, he must be really great."

There was a peal of laughter.

Gopal : "If Ramswami (M. R. Ramswami Iyer) were here he would have published in *The Vision* what is announced by that Seattle newspaper, a cutting of which has been sent by Mildred Hamilton."

Papa : "Now Krishnananda Swami is here looking after the journal work. He may publish the matter. But why do you talk about others' publishing the matter ? Are you interested in publishing it ?"

Gopal : "My interest is of no importance."

Papa : "You can suggest."

Gopal : "My suggestion has no value at all."

Mataji completed her Ramnam writing. The lantern was removed and all retired.

553. **Spirit of service** Papa and S. together left the office at 8-45 a.m. and walked towards the old kitchen, in front of which there was a small pandal put up for some creepers of kakri (small cucumber). That year the yield was abundant. Papa went under the pandal and looked for some tender fruits. He himself plucked one and gave to S. who also plucked another. They saw a few more tender ones but Papa did not want to pluck them that day. He said: "Ramdas will take them day after tomorrow. He will eat these only on alternate days."

On return, the kakri fruits were handed over to Rukmabai who was coming towards Papa with a plate containing a few vegetables for him to choose what he would have for lunch. He gave suggestions and turned towards the bhajan-hall. S. was following him, holding an umbrella.

A chair had already been brought and kept for Papa under the banyan tree. Papa sat on it. C. S. Krishna Iyer of Chittur, who had come for Mataji's birthday, was still in the ashram. He wished to stay on for a long period. He was very quiet and engaged himself most of the time in reading scriptures, repeating Ramnam and such other sadhana. Krishna Iyer came near Papa holding a wet towel in his hand. Apparently he had his bath only a few minutes back. It was unusual for him to go near Papa like that, holding a wet towel. Seeing him drawing near, S. asked: "Krishna Iyer, you have perhaps just finished bath. What is the matter?"

Krishna Iyer: "I just finished my bath. I came here to know if Papa and Mataji were disturbed early in the morning by my reading."

S (to Papa): "Papa, every morning Krishna Iyer reads some slokas, sings kirtans, and so on. This morning it seems X. told him that Papa got up earlier, being disturbed by his loud reading, and that it would be better for him to do his reading in some other room. Was Papa really disturbed?"

Papa (to Krishna Iyer): "Not at all. Even last night Ramdas decided to get up early this morning to wake up Ramkishor and ask him to play the violin. He did not hear your reading at all. You may go on with your reading. Even if we hear, it will not disturb us. Mataji was sleeping in spite of the noise of the violin in the room. X. is our manager. He sometimes wants to boss over us also. Y. is also of the same type. X. had absolutely no business to come and tell you before ascertaining from us if we were really disturbed."

Krishna Iyer: "I am not telling this as a complaint against X. I wanted to ascertain if Papa was disturbed."

Papa : "Ramdas understands you."

Krishna Iyer went to his room. Before long, X. came out of his room and was approaching Papa. Seeing him, Papa said in a fairly loud voice so as to be audible to X. also at a distance : "Our yajaman (master) is coming." X. understood the joke. His face became pale. He came near and stood quiet.

Papa : "You are our manager, are you not ? What business had you to go and tell Krishna Iyer this morning that Ramdas and Mataji were disturbed by his reading in the early hours of the morning ? Last night itself we had decided to get up early. Before you told him, you never said a word about it to us. Even if we were disturbed, you had no business to go and tell him that. It was our business. You took upon yourself the authority to tell him not to read in his room. Is this the way you serve our visitors ? This is not service, but bossing. Under the guise of service you are doing such things. Y. is also of the same type. He pokes his nose into everything in the office. Often he gets scolding from Balaji for this. Still he continues. He gives suggestions to Ramdas. He writes to Ramdas when Ramdas is on tour that he should do this way and not do that way. Both of you appear to be so humble and serviceable and all that, but in fact you want to keep even us under your thumb. This is not service. Do you think it is ? He tries to boss over those in the office. You want to boss over the visitors. When Ramdas points out your mistakes you do not like it. You still think you are right."

X. : "I realised later that I was at fault. When I came to the room I heard Krishna Iyer reading, and at the same time noticed that Papa and Mataji had got up. I thought that it was because of the noise of his reading that you got up so early. Immediately I told him so."

Papa : "Do you know now that what you told him was false ? What is the use of your doing bhajan, writing Ramnam, doing dhyan and so on ? They are for the purpose of purifying the mind and enlightening the intellect. They should remove the animal nature and make us human and then make us divine. You seem to be doing things without making use of the intellect just like animals. You must think and act. Krishna Iyer was very sorry to hear that he had disturbed our sleep. You caused needless sorrow. (to S.) : "Ramdas does not find time to talk to these people such things privately. So he talks in the presence of others. Friends think that we are harassing them in spite of their loyal service. They do not know everything about these matters. They only see us scolding X. and Y. X. serves some with all love and is loved by them. In some cases he is harassing the visitors who in turn abuse him and go away. He serves where he likes and does not care where he dislikes. He does not serve all equally. That should not be the spirit."

It was getting warmer. Papa got up from his seat and came to his room. He did not pursue the subject further. At meal time, Mataji told S. : "X. came and told me

everything. Papa also told me. X. said that he wished Papa should speak to him so that he might once for all be freed from such bad habits. It seems, when I scold him he is not much affected. He says, if Papa scolds him, it will go deep down and change him. If X. takes it in this spirit it is very good and he can progress."

S : "I wonder how X. suddenly does such things."

Mataji : "Y. also. Both of them are alike."

S : "X. regrets later his actions."

Mataji : "And wants to mend his ways. That is a sign of progress."

554. It was past 5-30 p.m. when Papa returned from his usual evening walk. He took his seat on the cement bench. Near the seat
Heaven and hell Manorama and Tarabai were waiting. They sat on the steps in front of Papa. Two or three children were playing nearby. The sun was about to set. The whole place was bright and the setting sun shed its purple light directly on Papa's face.

Manorama (*in Konkani*) : "Papa, is there a place called hell ? There is so much description of hell in various books."

Papa (*in Konkani*) : "Hell and heaven are here only. They are not anywhere else. When you enjoy the fruits of your good actions you are in heaven and when you suffer for your bad actions you are in hell."

Manorama : "Those books say that we go to hell after our death if we commit sins here, and there we will be put in boiling oil, or fire and so on and that the way to hell is in such and such a direction."

Papa : "They write as if they have actually seen hell."

Manorama : "They write that this is told by Vishnu to Garuda."

Papa : "They put their words into the mouth of Vishnu."

Manorama : "We believe them because they are told by Vishnu, and Vishnu will not tell lies."

Papa : "Vishnu won't tell lies. These are written only to frighten people and save them from committing sins. If we are told that in doing a certain evil act we will get punishment of a particular type, we won't be tempted to commit such an act considering the severity of the punishment. This is their idea. In spite of reading these books, people think that after all, the sufferings will be only after death, and that they should enjoy now somehow or other."

Manorama : "Are the fruits of our evil actions to be suffered in this life itself or in the next life ?"

Papa : "We see now some people suffer for their evil actions soon after they commit them ; some suffer later. In some cases, perhaps, they have to suffer in the next life. It is no use reading such books. Instead of wasting your time on them you should read books on devotion. Ramdas once started reading *Siva Purana* in the ashram. That book is full of such stories. He read it for a few days and then discontinued."

The gateman, who had been instructed to go to the Post Office daily and bring the letters, came with the day's post and Papa got busy with the post.

555. 10 p.m. Papa was lying down. Mataji was writing Ramnam sitting near his cot. Motiben, Subbaram and S. were in the room. There was news that Sri Swami Anandashram had accepted Papa's invitation to visit the ashram. The Swamiji was expected in the first week of December for a week's stay. The talk that ensued was about the Swamiji and the arrangements that were to be made for his stay. Then Papa suddenly remembered a person who came in the evening, and told Mataji : "In the evening a man came. He could not have seen you as you were in the field at that time. We learnt that he was a merchant and had taken a contract recently to supply gorochana worth thirtythree thousand rupees to Singapore. He was not able to procure the quantity in spite of great efforts. He had consequently to ask for extension of time twice. He had to complete his contract in a month. He came to Mangalore and could procure gorochana worth three thousand rupees. He has yet to get the remaining quantity. He was very much worried on that account. He happened to get down at Kanhangad railway station and was sitting there in a very depressed mood.

"The booking clerk there who belonged to Salem, came to know the condition of the man and asked him to go to Anandashram and see Ramdas. This suggestion did not appeal to him and he questioned the booking clerk : 'What ? I am a business man. What business have I with a swami and what am I to do there ? I am not going to do sadhana there !' But the booking clerk requested him again to go over here. He agreed. The taxi that brought him came straight up to the ashram, while Ramdas was standing near the gate, watching the progress of the construction of the shed. It was past 5-30 p.m. The man got down and Subbaram informed him that the person he wanted to see was standing near the gate. He came to Ramdas, fell at his feet and stood up gazing intently at Ramdas. He said, 'Swamiji, I am blessed today because I have your darshan. The darshan has taken away all my worries and cares.

Let me look at you for some time.' He stood there gazing at Ramdas. Don't know what he saw in Ramdas's face. After a few minutes Ramdas asked Subbaram to take him to the kitchen and give him a cup of coffee.

"Hearing that he said, 'I do not want coffee or anything. Let me look at your face. That is all that I want.' After sometime, however, he was taken to the kitchen and given coffee. Subbaram enquired if he wanted to see anything in the ashram to which he got the reply, 'What do I care about anything else? I want to see only the Swamiji, nothing else.' He soon came back and stood before Ramdas for twenty minutes.

"When it was time to go, he told Ramdas, 'I wish to come here again. Your grace must make it possible for me.' Ramdas replied, 'God will make it possible' The man said, 'Where is God? You are God' Ramdas again told him, 'The Divine will' The man again cut short Ramdas's words and said, 'Where is the Divine? You are the Divine.' So saying, he went away."

LIV

Anandashram, October 10, 1957

556. The previous day, Mataji was taking out some fruits and sorting
A gift parcel them in the kitchen. On seeing S. she said, "Swami — has sent
 this parcel of fruits and also a tin of sweets. You take one sweet
ball from that tin. The Swamiji has written that these are intended for Papa, myself
and you."

S: "What? Has the Swamiji written like that?"

Mataji: "That was how I understood from what Papa told me. I was not at
all happy to hear that. It is not becoming of a Swami to write in that way. He
could have at least added 'and for others in the ashram'. When I knew it was only
for the three of us, I did not feel like taking anything from this. Still I ate a sweet
ball saying to myself that I am eating that for all. From those who put on ochre
cloth we expect a wider vision. I am not pointing this out as a fault of the Swami —.
I am again and again impressing upon you all the need to maintain always the
universal outlook. How long are you to go on with this narrow outlook?"

That day, at 8-30 a.m., Papa handed over to S. the letters received the
day before with instructions for the replies. Then he passed on a slip a paper to
S. saying, "This is the chit that was in the parcel that came from Swami — yesterday.
You may acknowledge receipt of the parcel."

S. took the chit and read the contents which ran as follows :

"A humble offering to H. H. Sri Ramdasji and Mother Krishnabai,
Sri Satchidanandaji and other members of your Anandashram."

S. immediately recollected what Mataji had told him the previous evening on
the subject.

He therefore told Papa: "Yesterday Mataji was under the impression that
Swami — had written that the contents were for three of us only. On that account
she was very unhappy. She could not stand a swami writing that way. But the
Swamiji has written clearly, and other members..."

Papa : "You must tell Mataji about it."

S : "Yes, I shall tell her."

Papa left the office room and walked towards the kitchen, S. following, Mataji was standing on the veranda.

S (to Mataji) : "Swamiji has written clearly in the chit that the contents of the parcel are for distribution among all members in the ashram."

Mataji : "Is it so ? That is very good. I did not clearly understand when Papa told me yesterday. Now it is all right."

Papa : "Swamiji will not do any such thing. He is a man of experience."

Mataji : "I should not speak unless I understand well."

Papa and S. went to the carpenter-shed, then to the pandal for plucking two cucumbers, and thence to Narsimha Iyer house to see the painting work and finally Papa sat on a chair under the banyan tree. Rukmabai brought a few vegetables on a plate for Papa to choose what he would have for lunch.

557. The ashram cattle were seen going out for grazing. Two bulls
A bull fight were engaged in a fierce fight, while other cows, buffaloes, etc.,
 walked on. This scene was very clear from where Papa sat. The
fight went on for about half an hour. Both were equally strong and therefore there
was no chance of any one getting defeated.

Papa : "We are seeing the bull-fight without paying any charge for it. Now for anybody to go near and separate them is dangerous. They will stop fighting only when they get tired."

By then Appukuttan, the chalak (organiser) of Ambar Charka work under the Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh who had come that morning was standing near Papa to discuss the Ambar Charka classes to be started there in the upstairs hall of the S. K. Vidyalaya. The Charkas had already arrived and they were being assembled. Manindra Chandra Lahiri was to take charge of the training work after he first got trained and qualified for the work.

Papa called Subbaram and told him : "Ask Mataji to come here. She can see the bull-fight if she comes here immediately and also discuss the Ambar Charka work.

Mataji came there shortly afterwards and saw the bulls still fighting. She remarked : "They won't give up till one is defeated."

She then told Papa that she had no time to discuss as she had something else to attend to immediately. So Papa postponed the discussion for the afternoon.

October 12, 1957

Sadhu Bhandasji, his brother Ramjee Arjun, and his mother arrived at 8-15 in the morning. The car stopped near the banyan tree beneath which Papa was sitting. Papa got up to receive the Sadhuji who had by then alighted from the car and approaching Papa garlanded him. His brother and mother then paid their respects to Papa. They were then taken to Mataji who was then in the kitchen.

Sadhu Bhandasji was a native of Kutch. He was the disciple of Sant Garibdasji and had an ashram near Bhuj. He was about forty years of age, and always wore white clothes.

October 13, 1957

558. S. came to see Mataji at 7 a.m. in the kitchen as usual, before
Ashram breakfast. Mataji: "Yesterday itself I said I would tell you about
finances the conversation I had with Papa. Have you forgotten it?"

S: "Yesterday it was not convenient nor did I remember it."

The financial condition of the ashram ever since its Silver Jubilee in 1955 had not been very good. In the early part of 1956 the ashram liabilities were more than rupees sixtyfive thousand. The amount was gradually cleared by the handsome donations specially offered for the purpose by Gunvantrai T. Kamdar, Natverlal G. Parikh, Bansidhar G. Parikh and their families. The dues were completely cleared off in April 1957. But again, as the monthly donations received did not cover the expenses, the ashram had been getting into the red. The amounts due to the provision merchants and others had been steadily on the increase.

Mataji's generous nature did not permit her to reduce the expenditure and avoid running into debts. She had been wishing to reduce the expenditure but she miserably failed in actual practice. When the amounts due were rising, she was feeling sure that Papa would arrange to meet the demands in time. She never felt that she was in want. When on an earlier occasion S. asked Mataji what her reaction was to those debts and the pressing monetary demands, her reply was that she never felt she was without money. She was always conscious that she was the eternal child of Papa who was the whole universe and beyond, and therefore all the moneys in the world were at his disposal. The question arose how the demands were to be met. She said that even a very rich man was sometimes put in such situations and that in spite of all his bank balances he could not pay ready cash if someone

demanding urgently. She said a rich man, if pressed to give a large sum in cash, say, on a Saturday evening, might find it difficult to meet the demand till the banks opened on Monday morning. So, she knew her money was only temporarily locked up and would be available for payment soon. She had however not been bold enough to tell Papa about the financial position from time to time ; nor was Papa asking about it. But whenever Papa enquired about the position, her answer was evasive. She had instructed the office not to keep ready the outstanding list lest Papa should ask for it. Papa, no doubt, knew vaguely that large amounts were due to the merchants, but not the exact figure.

For the past two weeks Appayya Narsing Rao was being paid almost everyday and Papa came to know about it and enquired why he alone was paid and not the others, and whether the amount already paid to Appayya was not in excess of what was due. When Mataji answered that money was still due to him, Papa was not satisfied. So he called for details from the office of the amounts paid to Appayya and the amount still due to him. The list which showed dues of over four thousand rupees was given to Papa by Mukund Rao (cashier and accountant) and after Papa saw that, he had a talk with Mataji. It was about that that Mataji wanted to tell S.

Mataji (*opening the lock of the kitchen store-room*) : "I shall tell you now itself. It won't take long and we can stand here in the store-room."

Mataji : "When Mukund gave the statement of accounts to Papa, Appayya and I were also there. Papa then asked me why he was not apprised of the accounts. I replied that I purposely did not tell him since heavy outstandings would worry him which was not good for his diabetic trouble. He asked me why I presumed so. He had himself told you last year that he too was a human being and was at times sleepless on account of the ashram finances. Papa did not further pursue the subject ; but at night, he asked if he looked worried and what I took him for. I replied that I took him to be all-knowing. For some time he did not say anything. A little later, he asked if it was not right for him as Isvara to worry or be anxious for the welfare of the devotees. I replied, 'yes'. Again he asked if it was not also right that he should not, as a devotee of God, worry at all for anything. I again replied, 'yes'."

559. A little after 8 a.m. Papa and Mataji, accompanied by a number of ashramites and also Sadhu Bhandasji, went to the hall upstairs in the Sri Krishna Vidyalaya where the Ambar Charka class was to be opened.

Papa and Sadhu Bhandasji sat on a cushioned seat there. Motiben and Manindra Chandra Lahiri performed pada pooja to Papa in the midst of singing of Ramnam. Pooja over, Papa saw the demonstration of the working of the charka and returned after spending about half an hour.

560.

**The coming
of the
Hamiltons—
Christ
consciousness
is cosmic
consciousness**

Rev. Ralph B. Hamilton and Yogacharya Mildred Hamilton were expected at 8-30 a.m. From early morning Papa had been busy with the arrangements for them in the new guest house. After satisfying himself about the arrangements Papa came to Panchavati and sat under the banyan tree. In a short while a car arrived and stopped near the tree. Papa got up and came near the car. Mildred Hamilton who got down first, came to Papa almost in ecstasy, took his arm in hers, asked him how he was, and expressed how happy she was to be there. Ralph Hamilton also paid his respects to Papa. Their faces shone with joy. Papa too felt overwhelmingly happy to receive them coming as they did from such a distant place as Seattle in U.S.A. He took them to the rooms enquiring on the way how their journey was. They said they were very happy, that they met some of Papa's devotees on the way: N.C. Patel in Singapore, K. Ramachandra, Ghanshamdas and party in Ceylon and Veeraraghavan at Coimbatore, who were all very loving and helpful to them in everyway.

They entered the room and immediately Papa asked for tea to be brought.

Papa : "Now that you have come and have no more responsibilities in Seattle, you may stay on here as long as you want."

Mildred : "That is very fine, Papa."

The conversation went on in a lighter vein for a while. They explained how it was made possible for them to come there and how happy they were as their wish had been fulfilled.

M.H. : "Papa, when I was sitting with you at the Seattle airport I asked when we would meet again. You told me, 'If the desire of the devotee is very keen, God will fulfil it.' How true, Papa ! Otherwise, it would not have been possible for us to come here. We have come here only for you. You are God in human form. I know you would say that God is everywhere and that all forms are God's. But, for me, yours is different. You are God Himself made manifest."

Tea was brought and Papa said : "You must be hungry ; have tea."

M.H. : "Papa, really I am not feeling hungry at all. I am filled with God. God is my food."

Papa urged them to take tea without further delay. So they went to the table. Papa also got up. Thinking that Papa was going away from the room, Mildred called out a little loudly, "Papa, please don't go away. Sit here (on the cot)." Papa took his seat.

M.H. : "We have been thinking of you. We have been telling our friends about you. Papa, my Guru taught the same thing as you tell us now. I tell people that you are the ideal our Guru taught. Is not Christ-consciousness lower than Cosmic consciousness ? I mean to say, was Jesus Christ not in the dual plane ?"

Papa : "Christ-consciousness is the highest consciousness, that is, Cosmic consciousness. Jesus had a body and that was the manifestation of the Cosmic consciousness. Jesus had often said : 'I and my Father are one'—'I am on my Father's business.' He maintained his oneness with the Supreme Truth, but at the same time said that he was the son of the Father in Heaven. He saw evil so as to set the evil-doers right. He lashed at the money-lenders to make them give up their evil. Christ was the very personification of God."

M.H. : "Christ was and you are, Papa ! (*Papa laughs*). It seems you had mentioned somewhere that it would take at least a hundred years for Japan to progress spiritually."

Papa : "Ramdas does not remember to have made any such statement. He has only mentioned in the book *World is God*, that Japan should rise again and carve out a great future on the lines of the principles taught by the four great religions : Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism."

M.H. : "What I don't like is the idol worship that is going on there. It seems, when somebody goes to a temple there, he is supposed to clap his hands and make a sound to draw God's attention to him."

S : "In the Hindu temples also there are gongs which the devotees strike when they go for worship."

Ralph : "Does this not show that they do not consider God as all-pervading ? We are told that when somebody prays before an idol his conception is that God who is all-pervading, all-powerful and all-knowing, has taken that form, as also all other forms. Does he really feel so when he prays ?"

Papa : "When a devotee stands before an image he must feel that image is only a form of the Supreme Being. Through the worship of the form he must go to the formless."

R.H. : "But they do not seem to think of the formless at all. They seem to be satisfied with the worship of a particular image."

Papa : "That won't do. Ramdas has been telling everybody that idol worship is only a stage which has to be transcended."

M.H. : "But they consider it as the end. Why should they have that stage at all ?"

Papa : "For children in the spiritual line, there must be something to hold on to. Those who crawl must get up to stand only by holding on to some support. Worship of the personal form is that support. If they do not have that support they will never be able to stand up at all. After they stand properly they can give up the support."

M.H. : "But they don't give up the support."

Papa : "Take the case of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was worshipping the image of Kali. Later he found Her in himself and everywhere with the result that he did not find any necessity to go to the temple at all. So one must go beyond the forms by the worship of a form of God. It is not easy to think of the impersonal straightway. Many cannot. But Ramdas is never for anyone worshipping a particular form of God all his life. That is not the purpose of image worship. You see what has happened among the Buddhists. Buddha condemned image worship. But his devotees made an image of Buddha and are worshipping it. It is impossible to give up image worship entirely. You must have something to cling to."

M.H. (*pointing to Ralph*) : "Papa, I call him father, you are my Papa. I have love. He has reason. I give him a little of my love and he gives me a little of his reason. Thus we are trying to balance love and reason. We have come here 'full'. We want the final touch from you, so that we may be stabilised in Divine Consciousness."

Papa : "You will have it. You have come for that and you will surely have it."

M.H. : "It is by God's will alone that we have come here. God told me that I should take him (Ralph) to Him. Now I have fulfilled my duty. From now it is your responsibility to look after him." (*Papa laughs*)

R.H. : "Papa has very big hands to take this responsibility."

Papa : "Oh yes."

M.H. : "I have love. But I cannot say that I have been able to love everyone equally. Mostly I am successful. In a few cases I have not been able to accept them as divine. I simply could not. I know the fault is mine. One thing, even if they tried to do any harm to me, I did not take revenge. There I accepted your advice."

Papa : "Revenge is not in your nature. You are all love. Things do not always happen as we wish. Leave them to God's will. God knows best."

The conversation continued for some time more when Papa asked them about the friends in Seattle, Bob Raymer and others. Papa told them that Raymer had given up his business and was going to make a spiritual colony in the land he had purchased

for the purpose. Mildred said it would have been fine if Raymer also had come here. When the conversation was going on, Mataji came to greet the Hamiltons. Mildred embraced her warmly while Ralph paid his respects to her with folded palms. Papa told them briefly the daily programme of the ashram beginning with meditation at 5-30 a.m. He said : "As Ramdas's health was not good he was not coming for the meditation so far. But from tomorrow he will be sitting there. Ramdas trusts you too will be coming."

M.H. : "Surely. We have come for that."

When Papa asked them if the accommodation was convenient Ralph said that when they left Seattle they expected nothing but Papa. So whatever they got by way of convenience was above their expectations.

It was past 10 o'clock. Papa got up and went for his bath.

The Hamiltons came to Papa's room at 3 o'clock when Papa was taking coffee. They sat on the chairs in front of Papa. Tea was brought for them. Papa got up, opened his almirah, took out a tin of biscuits and gave a few to each of them, conversing all the time. The main topic was sale of Anandashram books in U.S.A. and Papa's proposal to see if any one would undertake to bring out American editions of some of the books.

M.H. : "You have mentioned somewhere that you had been to Ramana Maharshi and that by his look your spiritual fulfilment was achieved."

Papa : "Yes."

M.H. : "We have come here for that purpose. We are to get that type of influence and grace you got from Maharshi."

Papa : "Are you in that state of mind as Ramdas was when he stood before the Maharshi?"

M.H. : "I think we are. Don't you think so?"

Papa : "Yes, you must be. You have come with so much aspiration from such a distant place."

As Papa was to get ready for the usual reading at 4 o'clock, S. took them out to show them round the ashram.

October 15, 1957

561. About 8 a.m. Papa left the office with S. handing him the previous
Papa day's letters for reply. They both came in front of the bhajan-hall
narrating and stood there awhile.
enlightening
stories Papa : "How is Mildred Hamilton this morning?"

S : "I have not seen her this morning. Are we going there ?"

Papa : "Ramdas thinks it is too early. He does not want to disturb them. You may please find out if Ramdas can go there."

Papa walked towards the chairs kept under the banyan tree. S. went to Hamilton's room and found both were yet to be ready to receive Papa. So at 9-30 Papa and S. went there together and found them waiting.

Papa : "How are you ? How is the back pain ?"

M.H. : "I am all right, Papa. Only the back gives a little pain."

On hearing Mildred's remark, Papa laughed and said : "Ramdas shall tell you a story. There was a great stoic philosopher. Ramdas does not exactly remember to which country he belonged. But in fact, sages belong to all countries. His name was Epictetus. He was a slave under the Roman Emperor and he was harshly punished by his master even for slight mistakes. He was beaten almost everyday by his master. One day for a trifling fault of Epictetus the master beat him so severely that his leg broke and he became lame. After some time a friend of Epictetus, who lived far away, came to see him and finding him limping asked him how he became lame. Then Epictetus gave a characteristic reply, 'I am not lame, but my leg is lame'. His detachment from the body was so perfect that he felt that whatever happened to it had nothing to do with him."

M.H. : "So I am all right. The back alone gives a little pain."

Papa : "Ramdas will tell you another story which he read in a book several years ago : A priest was giving a sermon in a church. Hundreds of people formed the congregation in which there were some diseased, poor and crippled persons. The priest told the people that God does not make any difference between the rich and the poor, the diseased and the healthy, the able-bodied and the cripple. His grace pours on all alike whatever their external conditions. In the course of the sermon, the priest's eye lighted upon a broken candle lying on the floor. He got down from the pulpit and took up the candle and holding it before the congregation, lit it with a match, and it gave light. The candle was crushed and crippled, but the touch of the flame made it bright with light. The match did not deny its fire to the candle just because it was broken, and the candle threw full light in spite of its broken condition. This shows that even cripples are not disqualified from obtaining the vision of God. They too have the light of God within them and will shine forth as in the case of anybody else."

M.H. (*laughing*) : "Papa, I am not a cripple."

Papa : "No, you are not a cripple. Ramdas did not compare you to the broken candle. Somehow he remembered the story. That's all."

M.H. : "I am glad you told me this story. I have a friend who is a cripple. She has immense faith in God and on account of her faith she could throw away her crutches last year. I shall send this story to her. She will be very happy."

Papa : "You may write to her by all means."

M.H. : "She is a wonderful soul. She does not worry about the external things at all. Her vision is drawn inwards."

Papa : "When you said her vision is drawn inwards, Ramdas remembers an incident that happened during one of his travels. In the early days of his travel he met a mahatma who was blind in both the eyes. When Ramdas went to see this mahatma there was with him a good and experienced doctor. Seeing the sadhu blind, the doctor examined his eyes and told him that a simple operation would set both his eyes right and give him clear vision, and that he was prepared to take him to his place and perform the operation himself. To this the mahatma replied that he was happy his external vision was taken away as he was quite satisfied with the internal vision he had and did not care for the external vision."

M.H. : "Papa, that is wonderful. My Master used to say that the eyes are thieves that do not allow the soul to turn towards God within. He also used to say that good and evil are both thieves that do not permit the soul to reach God."

Papa : "That means that you have to go beyond good and evil to realise God."

R.H. : "You are taking stories one after the other from your store-house."

Papa : "Ramdas has a large collection of stories. They come out one by one when occasion arises."

S : "There are about fifty stories in the book *Ramdas Speaks* told during the world tour."

Papa looked at his watch and expressed that it was time for him to go. He got up and came near the door. He suggested that in view of Mildred's indisposition she might rest and not come to see him in the afternoon, and he would come to see them in their room. Mildred did not agree as she knew Papa would be more comfortable in his room where he could sit under the punkha, and also as she was not that bad.

M.H. : "Papa, I am all right. The back alone has a little pain. (*Papa laughs*). The attitude of master and servant . . ."

Papa : "The Lord says that the master is Himself. The servant is Himself. Everything is He. Then where is the problem?" Saying this Papa walked away, leaving them to laugh to their heart's content.

562.
Mansur,
the mystic

2 p.m. Papa's room. Papa was ready to receive Mildred and Ralph Hamilton. Presently they came and sat on the chairs in front of Papa. The punkha in the room was pulled as it was getting very warm.

M.H.: "Papa, I was sitting and writing in the room. Suddenly Papa was before me (in my mental vision). We got up and came here."

Papa: "So you seem to have been possessed by Papa. Sit down. Ramdas will read out something from this book, *The Persian Mystics* :

"Mansur was a great Sufi saint. He had experienced oneness with God. Thereafter, he was going on saying 'Anal Haq', meaning 'I am God'. In those days it was considered blasphemous. He was very much persecuted and was finally pitched on a spear or a trident that was fixed on the ground. Blood was dripping from his wound. Wonderful it was! Each drop of the blood that fell down repeated the words 'Anal Haq'."

Papa then read out :

When Mansur was imprisoned
For proclaiming oneness with God,
His friend Shibli asked him,
"What is this love?"
"Come tomorrow
For answer", he said.
Shibli obeyed and found Mansur
Facing the gallows.
Mansur looked at him
And said, "Read the answer :
Love begins in absorbing the 'I'
And ends thus."
"Its noose tightens
To squeeze out the self
Then comes the test of the cross.
Stay if thou apprehendest the secret, otherwise go."

After finishing the reading, Papa raised his head with a beaming smile, looked at both of them and said, "Hear what he says :—'Love begins in absorbing the 'I' and ends thus.'" He then turned the page over and again read :

"If a lame dog
Finds admission at Thy gate
And the weary are refreshed by Thy sight
No reason have I for despair."

Papa then turned a few pages backwards and started reading :

"O Lord, if Thou holdest me responsible for my sins,
I shall cling to Thee for Thy Grace.
I, with my sin, am an insignificant atom,
Thy Grace is resplendent as the Sun."

Papa (*raising his head again and looking at them*) asked, "Is Ramdas boring you by reading this?" and laughed.

Mildred : "Are we separate from you ? Are the children different from Papa?"

Papa (*laughing*) : "Now Ramdas remembers something that happened many years ago. During his travels he came to the ashram of that saint (*pointing to the picture of Sri Siddharudha Swami on the wall*) in Hubli. In those days Ramdas was taking no food in the evenings. Even during the day he would take only a little rice and milk and keep awake all the night repeating God's name. One night he was sitting in the veranda of the samadhi temple there. A devotee of that ashram came to him and asked if Ramdas would like to have some food. As Ramdas did not reply he repeated his question. Ramdas was not in a mood to eat as he was blissfully absorbed in the Divine. He, therefore, asked the young man, 'To whom are you putting the question?' He replied, 'To you'. Ramdas then asked him, 'Is there a thing such as you or I when all is one. . . ?' That young devotee remarked : 'You are in the upper storey, eh' and went away. So you are in that high plane where everything is one, where you and I do not exist !"

LV

Anandashram, October 15, 1957

563.

Papa was in his room with Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton.

Grace

**governed by
lawless law**

R.H. : "We have heard that God confers His grace on those whom He chooses. You say that grace is pouring always on us."

Papa : "When we say God's grace has to come to us, it is like this. In the bright sun we sit with eyes closed and say there is no light. Closing the eyes, we deny the light and say we have no light. As soon as we open the eyes we see the light. The light did not come from anywhere afresh. It was there even when we had closed the eyes.

"Ramdas will give you an example. Some dust falls into a man's eyes. He gets pain and irritation and consequently he is unhappy. He goes to the doctor who cleans the eyes and removes the dust particles. The man is free from pain and is happy again. Is that a newly earned happiness? The happiness was already there, but the man had forgotten it for the time being due to the falling of the dust in his eyes. So it is that, though ever in contact with God we feel separate from Him, having forgotten our true being and nature, and therefore unhappy. A child playing near its mother happens to forget her presence and is very unhappy, but as soon as it is conscious that it is near its mother it is again exceedingly happy. God is ever with us. When the remembrance or awareness of Him comes, we at once find out that he is with us always. Suppose you have your purse in your pocket, but forget all about it, you feel upset and are unhappy. When you happen to put your hand in the pocket and feel the purse, you are happy. The happiness is not new. You have only recovered the happiness that was already there. In the same way, our union with God is an established fact, but we have forgotten this. This is what Hindu philosophy teaches us. The loss of happiness of the union with God is due to ignorance or whatever you may call it. How and why this ignorance came to us is the mystery. Why does the awareness of God come to some and not to others? That awareness itself is grace. We say grace has come to him. Grace is always there. He becomes aware of it now. When we are not aware of the grace, when we are not aware of our unity with God, we go about searching for eternal happiness in the external things, but not within ourselves. By doing so, we do not get that

happiness and we make ourselves miserable, we have no reason to be. God is all-pervading. It is not that He is all-pervading only after we realise Him. The Kingdom of Heaven is not a thing available only at a particular time. It is there always. On the removal of the forgetfulness you become aware of Him. You remove forgetfulness by remembering Him through repetition of His name and meditating on Him. Then you find out that He is in you and you are He."

R.H. : "Can all do that?"

Papa : "If they really aspire."

R.H. : "Why is it then that God reveals Himself to some and not to others?"

Papa : "He chooses to reveal Himself in a particular body and there He reveals Himself."

R.H. : "Is it that He chooses to awaken this one or that one because they have reached a point ready to be awakened?"

Papa : "There are so many trying to realise God, but do not succeed. Persons who never had any desire to realise Him, living a life of sin and so on, suddenly get His light."

M.H. : "Like St. Paul."

Papa : "Yes, like St. Paul."

R.H. : "Why is that?"

Papa : "That is a mystery, the depth of which we cannot gauge. In this connection Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa gives a very apt illustration. God is like a child. Sometimes He may appear to be whimsical from our point of view. He has got His own way of doing things. Why He does so, our poor intellect cannot gauge. Ramdas remembers here the definition of God as given by Sri Aurobindo : 'God is an eternal child, playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.' Sri Ramakrishna says, a child has a beautiful toy. A man closely moving with the child, asks for the toy. But the child refuses. No amount of persuasion makes the child part with the toy. With all the close intimacy and friendship with the child, the man does not succeed in getting the toy. But the child sees a stranger passing by. He calls him and gives the toy away."

M.H. : "Very nice. This reminds me of my Master. Once a great business man with a bloated ego wanted to see the Master. He finally got an appointment with the Master. When he entered the room instead of seeing the Master, as he

expected, sitting on a chair calm and serene, he found him playing with some toys as if to teach the business man, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven'."

Papa: "Unless we become like children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. We must be pure, childlike, innocent and guileless. Such children are the very embodiments of God. Their hearts are crystal pure. They have no illwill towards anybody. They are always cheerful. They have no idea of any difference in the world such as high or low, and so they love everybody alike. Such children are dear to God because God is like a child. When we surrender ourselves to Him, He makes us like Himself. There is a saying of a saint: 'The moment you surrender yourself to the guru, what does the guru do to you? Does he give anything? No. He makes you like himself.' Therefore, that saint says: 'First of all you should hold the guru's feet, and there will be no time lost before he makes you like himself.' That means, surrender yourself to Him, give up your ego, and that instant, you become God's own image, that is you are the mould and God pours Himself into that mould."

R.H.: "Guru being great, he can exercise his powers and make the disciple childlike."

Papa: "So many go to the guru and only one or two really get influenced by his contact. What is the basis or condition to get such influence, it is difficult to say. Those who stay with him, leading a fairly good life, do not seem to get anything. But a man who like the prodigal son has led a bad life, is embraced by the father with all love, so much so that the others become jealous. God is always for the redemption of those who are immersed in worldliness and suffer on that account. But we cannot say what law governs grace. It may be governed by a law which is a lawless law."

M.H.: "The son who was with the father, perhaps because of his good qualities, had his ego bloated which had to be got rid of."

Papa: "That's right. When the other one comes to the father in absolute surrender, the father welcomes him with open arms."

M.H.: "The prodigal son can be compared to St. Paul. Saul was speaking against God. He became Paul—which means little one or a new one on the spiritual path."

Papa: "So, God's choice is not according to any set law. His will is supreme. He does what He pleases. We must bend and bow to His will. No question to be asked. Ramdas remembers here some beautiful lines he had read in the book *Light of Asia* by Edwin Arnold, in which the life of Buddha and His teachings are given."

Buddha says : 'Do not dip the string of thought into the unfathomable. He who questions errs and he who answers errs.' Do not question God why He does this and why He does not do that. It is better to bend ourselves before Him, submit to His will, become like Himself and then diffuse the knowledge which we have gained, to everybody, so that they will be brought nearer to Him."

M.H. : "I understand you to say that God does not answer."

Papa : "Not all questions."

564.

M.H. : "When you ask a true question, God does answer."

Stage when

**no questions
arise**

Papa : "That stage is lower. There is a stage when you do not question at all. You have full trust in Him and your surrender is so complete that there is no question to be asked. Live as He wills, talk as He wills and do everything as He wills. Questions come when you have some doubts and when you want to know something, which means that duality still persists. The questioner must disappear."

M.H. : "I had an experience of God telling me something specifically. It was true. Someone came to my house and questioned the statement God had made through me. So I asked God to give me an answer. I wanted only God to reveal it."

Papa : "Sri Ramakrishna who had surrendered completely to the Mother was put questions and he was giving answers. He used to say that it was the Mother who gave the answers. Whenever there was no answer coming up to him he would wait, closing his eyes, and suddenly he would give the answer. He said that he was getting the supply from the Mother and he was only passing the answers to others just as a man measures out grains as he gets his supply passed on to him by another from behind. When the devotee feels, 'I am nothing and You are everything,' God answers him no doubt. But the devotee for himself has no doubts or questions to ask God."

M.H. : "I don't have any."

Papa : "So you may be only an instrument for answering the questions of devotees. It is not you who are doing it, but God does it through you. For yourself there is no question."

M.H. : "I have complete faith. The person questioned me about the statement. Then I asked God how to explain to him. It was beautifully done."

565. Papa : "Jesus had said, 'For I came down from heaven not to do my will but the will of Him that sent me.' He also said, 'How is it that ye sought me ? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business.'

"This body persists for their sake"

"Very often Ramdas tells these friends that he has attained everything and now this body works for them all. He has no hankering in life, to get any name or fame, nor has he to fulfil any desire. He is full. He is purna ; complete. There is nothing lacking so far as he is concerned. He is full of bliss, whether things come or go, whether he gets anything or not, whether people speak ill or well of him. He is not disturbed, His heart is full of divine love and joy. That is enough. What is there further for him to do? The body persists. It is for their sake. They therefore say that this body belongs to them and that they would take care of it and Ramdas must submit to any treatment or medication done to protect the body. Ramdas tells them again : 'This body is yours. You can make use of it in any way. But do not seek from him any material benefit. Ask only for the things of the spirit. Let your goal be God. Seek to reach Him and make use of Ramdas for it, but not for getting the earthly baubles of wealth, name, fame and so on. You may be wealthy, but if you have no faith in God, you are poor. You may be outwardly poor but if you have faith in God, you are the richest person in the world. So make use of Ramdas for achieving the highest thing in life, that is, God'."

566. Papa's room— Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton were with Papa.

Disciplines help only indirectly

M.H. : "I want God only."

Papa : "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you."

M.H. : "What do you say to this . . . ?"

Papa : "This is what Ramdas tells everybody who comes to him."

R.H. : "Is it that one has to go through a series of troubles, ceremonies, and so on, step by step before one can realise God ?"

Papa : "All that is done to know the greatness of grace. We do not admit it easily. When we pass through many disciplines in order to realise Him, we find ourselves helpless, because we have not achieved anything. Then it is that we surrender ourselves to Him, because He is the friend of the helpless. Unless we

become helpless He will not be our helper. To make ourselves realise that we are helpless we have to pass through all these disciplines. These disciplines by themselves will not enable us to achieve anything. Indirectly they will make us feel helpless."

M.H. : "Is it not true that by discipline you gain some powers and they stand in the way of your progress? At the same time, discipline is necessary to get rid of the ego."

Papa : "You must feel, 'Oh God, by myself I cannot do anything. I must progress by your strength and grace alone.' To attain to this stage some discipline is necessary. The ego is a terrible fellow. You have to give him a long rope and let him hang himself. Then he will say he is absolutely nothing. He becomes humble. In meekness and humility you find God. But the ego will not bend so easily. He pretends that he is a very humble devotee, but he inwardly knows it is only pride aping humility. This is the case with so many.

"We must not care about the powers we get by disciplines. Our aim should be realisation of God and nothing less. Then we are safe. With this end in view we struggle and struggle.

"It is very clear from the story of the two frogs in a pot of curds that you must churn, churn and churn, and stop. Then butter is formed, which will release you. You struggle for a while and afterwards give up the struggle by utter surrender to the will of God. In that state of surrender you get Him; but not by merely struggling. Struggle is a sure condition of progress. Struggle must cease in a state of surrender."

567. M.H. : "What I meant to say was this. There are certain mantras
Powers are which are used for concentrating upon God alone. But there are
to be other mantras also that are used for attaining certain powers for the
rejected control of certain elements."

Papa : "We must see that our ego is dissolved through spiritual practices. Our object is that but the ego seeks powers, it wants to exult over itself, it wants self-importance. We must humble ourselves to the dust before we can have Him. We must pay the full price, which means entire surrender of everything. Our powers, desires, aspirations, everything we must lay at His feet. Then alone He becomes ours. There is no doubt about it. Powers are nothing, siddhis are nothing. To show some miracles here and there is very bad. You should not run after powers. But there is a state which Jesus Christ had reached in which divine power used to flow through him and miracles were performed automatically."

M.H. : "That is 'seek first the Kingdom of Heaven'."

Papa : "Yes. If the powers come to you on the way, reject them and once you have gained the goal, these powers become your slaves."

R.H. : "If the Masters permit their disciples to take such mantras in order to gain powers, are they not deluding the students, as their progress will be hampered by such practices?"

Papa : "Yes. They are misleading them. The path must be straight to Him."

M.H. : "I will tell you an incident that happened. A woman had a pain in her shoulders and she was directed to a master who had this type of mantra. She was to repeat the mantra one thousand times daily for fortyfive days. A ceremony was performed when the chanting of the mantra began with the sprinkling of rice and so on. It was said that if that mantra was repeated for fortyfive days, all the individuals who had gone to God, by that mantra would be forced to come to the aid of that individual and heal her."

Papa : "That is a very strange thing. Why should not God's power be made to come to that person directly and cure her of the trouble? Why does one have to catch hold of this person and that person? Ramdas does not believe in that . . ."

M.H. : "I am glad that you say so."

568. The loving conversation was kept up uninterruptedly till Lingappa
See God in all brought refreshments for Papa and others.

R.H. (to S.) : "Is that pen all right?"

M.H. : "May we give you a pen?"

S : "Thanks. I can manage with this."

Papa : "Why should you hesitate to have it? After all, it is God giving God. In this connection Ramdas remembers when some new visitors come here, they ask us what type of pooja we do and where the images of worship are. We tell them that our worship is of the living gods, who come here as visitors or devotees. So we are all gods. Are we not?"

M.H. : "God is in everybody. But some persons are living a pure life while some are not."

Papa : "You have to see God in them too. When you say you see God everywhere you will be incapable of seeing evil at all."

Other friends stepped in to listen. Papa introduced Sadhu Bhandasji to them as a saint from Kutch. Bhandasji does not speak English. So the Hamiltons could not enter into any conversation with him. Noticing that Bhandasji was sitting on the floor, Papa told him in Hindi : "You are sitting on the floor while we are sitting on the chairs. You have to kindly excuse us."

Sadhu Bhandasji : "That does not matter."

Papa : "All of you are gods. Ramdas is the servant of God."

M.H. : "Suddenly God becomes the servant."

Papa : "Master is God. Servant is God. He plays all parts. This is His lila. This is not maya. Devotees take it as lila or play of God. World is a stage. Ramdas remembers what Shakespeare has said in this connection."

Papa got up and took from the shelf the book *World is God*, opened it, turned a few pages and read out :

"All the world's a stage
All the men and women merely players,
They have their exits and their entrances."

Continuing, Papa said, "Ramdas will read out for you something that he wrote many years ago. (to S.) : Please get the book *Divine Life* from the shelf in the bhajan-hall."

Papa opened the book and read the article 'Divine Alchemy'. He read fast, all listening with rapt attention. Papa was often raising his head and looking straight at their faces with a broad smile everytime, perhaps with a view to seeing how they responded. The whole article was read out. Papa raised his head again and looked at them now with a broader smile and for a longer time. It looked as if a child was looking at the mother to get her appreciation for having done something great.

The Hamiltons said : "How nice !"

Papa : "Ramdas wrote, or rather Ram made him write this twenty years ago and since then his life is being worked out on those lines."

October 15, 1957

569. Papa, the Hamiltons, Sadhu Bhandasji and others were sitting in **Image worship** Papa's room.

R.H. : "Is God not far away from all the things that are being done in temples and what we call ceremonies ?"

Papa : "They are immersed in so many things that God seems to be very far away from them. Those who are engaged in such worship and rituals are like infants in kindergarten. They must realise God within them."

M.H. : "Will it take centuries and centuries for them to get out of the kindergarten and know the truth within them?"

Papa : "Instead of playing with fire, is it not better to play with cool things? At least these people are engaged in various things in the name of God. On the other hand, there are many who are deeply immersed in worldly enjoyment and never remember God. Their plight is terrible. The image worshippers may carry on their worship and a time will come when they will throw off everything and go up. God is their aspiration, although they are seeking Him in things that cannot give them that blessed state. But those who do not have even this type of devotion sink deeper and deeper into the worldly mire, as it were, passing through suffering, sorrow and grief."

R.H. : "Will God not send a messenger to them?"

Papa : "Yes, God will send a messenger and raise them. Buddha was one of them. When he came, Hinduism was in a degenerate state. People were immersed in rituals. He washed away everything and asked people to be pure in thought, word and deed, so as to find the Truth within themselves. So also Jesus saw the degeneration in religion. He washed away everything and taught people the way to realise God."

M.H. : "Krishna did the same thing."

Papa : "Krishna in *the Bhagavad Gita* teaches no God outside ourselves. He says, 'I stay in the heart of everybody. Realise Me there. Surrender yourself to Me, giving up all other paths. Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone. I will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not.' Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No man can go to the Father except through Me.' The 'I' mentioned by Krishna and the 'I' mentioned by Jesus are one and the same. It is God speaking through them in different forms."

M.H. : "I am told that worship of Krishna is degenerating in India."

Papa : "You will find degeneration everywhere. People are living an immoral life. So, degeneration in religion is inevitable. But there will be some revival when some great soul comes and awakens people to the reality of things. Such souls do come from time to time."

M.H. : "If we can take all the sects away from religion and just worship God saying 'I am God's child', that day there will be peace on earth."

Papa : "Exactly."

M.H. : "Jesus came to teach universal religion. When they started the Roman Catholic religion they took Christ away from catholicism."

Papa : "Perfectly true".

570. R.H. : "What did Buddha say? What was his pure original
Buddha and teaching?"
Christ

Papa : "He did not preach in that way. He said he was taking people from darkness to light when he was guiding them towards Reality. The way taught by him was through purification of oneself. He emphasised a pure and moral life as the basis of a truly spiritual life. He said there are ten evils in men to be conquered. They are three of the mind, four of the tongue and three of the body. The three evils of the mind are : envy, scepticism and wrath ; the four of the tongue are : lying, gossiping, abusing and slandering ; the three evils of the body are : violence, adultery and stealing. As God is indefinable, Buddha did not try to define Him. He calls the absolute state of freedom from the thralldom of desires *NIRVANA*."

R.H. : "But how did he teach his followers?"

Papa : "He asked them to follow certain disciplines, to love and serve all fellow beings. When one is trying to purify oneself this way, one cannot but be kind and loving to everyone. Buddha believed in practical religion, He insisted on offering love to everybody. Jesus Christ taught the same thing—"Love thy enemy". In the case of Buddha, he said : 'Give love for hate', which means the same,"

R.H. : "Christ taught ahimsa also. He said one must forgive others their mistakes, not merely seven times but seventy times seven. People are tired of being preached at. They want to be shown something to do, some kind of discipline to be followed."

571. Papa : "Such preaching must go. They will not discipline
Love themselves unless they feel the urge. The best thing is not to
triumphs preach, but to live that real life yourself. Then people who come
into contact with you, watching your own life, will be transformed.
So, contact of saints is the most important thing. You will find that when you are
in the company of saints, you are changed within. There, you do not feel inclined
to do wrong things at all, whereas you might have been doing many evil acts before.
Your heart becomes so full of compassion that though you were a miser before, not
prepared to spend a cent for others, now you are ready to spend money in the service
of others freely."

R.H. : "What about the Christian ministers and priests ?"

Papa : "Most of them do not practise what they preach. If they themselves practise at least for one or two years, they will get tremendous spiritual power which can produce the required transformation in those who hear them."

M.H. : "We cannot give God to someone else unless we have found Him ourselves."

Papa : "A beggar cannot be a giver. A rich man can alone be a giver. You must find God yourself first. Then only you have the right to teach others."

M.H. : "The emphasis today in Christianity is on sins. They do not concentrate upon God. They only think of the evil and try to get rid of it. Everytime you concentrate upon evil, you get your mind away from God and produce a state of war within yourself. I feel we must concentrate on God alone."

Papa : "You are right. We should concentrate on God alone."

M.H. : "People are trying to find some fault in others."

Papa : "Instead of seeing and concentrating upon goodness and God, if people concentrate on evil, the evil in them naturally gets stronger. If they see goodness or God everywhere they fill their hearts with God. If we see others' faults we will be far away from God."

R.H. : "What will happen to those who are evil ?"

Papa : "If we love them the evil will leave them. Once it happened that many years ago, in the ashram where Ramdas was before, a man was coming to see Ramdas. In advance another man came and informed Ramdas that a very bad and evil person was coming to the ashram and that Ramdas should not see or talk to him, or allow him inside. Ramdas did not listen to the friend's advice. Soon afterwards, the so-called evil man came. As soon as he came near Ramdas, Ramdas embraced him with all love. That man fell at Ramdas's feet and wept repenting of his evil deeds. He was saying how sinful he was, how great and holy was Ramdas and still how Ramdas condescended to embrace him. All the evil left him and he became a changed man. If you see God in them, God will reveal Himself in their hearts. You must, in spite of all their defects, love them. That is how God loves us. If He sees our defects, He will not touch us even with a pair of tongs. A child becomes dirty by playing in mud. It goes to its mother. The mother does not reject the child. She washes the child of all the dirt and gives it clean clothes. So when we approach God with all our weaknesses, He does not reject us. He accepts us, purifies us and makes us His own. Therefore, we say God is love. He who dwells in love dwells in God and God dwells in him."

M.H.: "That is absolutely true. But the evil-doers say that God being absolute and all-comprehensive, the so-called evil also is born of God."

Papa: "There cannot be any evil in God. Can there be darkness in the sun? Evil is man's own property."

M.H.: "Man has done a very good job of making evil."

Papa: "Denial of God is the sin and evil. God is all purity, love, peace and joy."

It was about 3-45 p.m. Papa had to get ready for the next programme of reading and translating *Ramdas Speaks* to the mothers.

R.H.: "Papa, you have been talking for a long time. You have again to read from 4 o'clock. Are you not tired?"

Papa: "No. That is his job." (*All laugh*)

R.H.: "Has God also a job?" (*Papa laughs again*)

October 16, 1957

572. It was 2 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton came to Papa's room. Mildred saw Bhaskaran pulling the punkha and something on his face attracted her attention. She asked him: "What is it on your face?" Bhaskaran did not know English. So he could not reply. S. asked him the same question in Malayalam and he told M.H. that it was an insect bite.

M.H.: "Oh, insect bite! This is the day to talk about insects. You find a lot of them. I find some coming to our rooms. . . ."

Papa: "When speaking about insects, Ramdas will tell you something. There is an insect called bhamara. Its work is to transform some other kind of insect into its likeness. It catches hold of some stray insect and places it before it and gives a sting. Then it intently gazes and gazes at the insect. The insect also gazes at the bhamara as it is frightened by the sting. So they go on looking at each other. When the insect turns its gaze away, the bhamara gives it another sting and makes it gaze again. The result of this process is that the other insect changes itself into bhamara. Sometimes it so happens that the bhamara picks up a wrong insect and so fails to convert it and throws it away. Only the right type of insects are converted. This is known as Bhamara Keeta Nyaya in Vedantic parlance. Such should be the relationship between guru and disciple. The guru gazes at the disciple, pours his grace on him and converts him into his own likeness. That is the type of transformation that takes place in the disciple by the contact of the guru."

573. **Insects and snakes** M.H.: "The reason why I took up the question of insects is that in America we are very conscious of the insects because we have been warned against them. These insects cause the spread of bacteria and various diseases. These diseases hinder the progress of an individual in his efforts to attain God. So is it all right to do away with them completely?"

Papa: "Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to sleep under a mosquito-net as there were plenty of mosquitoes in Calcutta, especially on the banks of the Ganges. Thus he was able to prevent mosquito bites and could avoid killing them."

M.H.: "Papa, this is wonderful. With whatever I feel about, you agree."

Papa: "There is authority for it. If we do not kill them they will eat up our body. What kind of meditation can we have when mosquitoes and bugs are biting us? Here in the ashram we kill the mosquitoes by spraying flit."

R.H.: "There are some people in India who do not kill any insect. This news spreads around and a lot of people in America can be heard talking that in India nobody kills bugs or other insects and so they wonder how people live in India."

Papa: "Some do not kill. They say that their religion does not allow killing of any type. But the fun of it is that though they abstain from killing bugs they freely exploit people by taking heavy interest on loans and thus reduce them to a state of beggary. Wantonly you should not kill. If you see any ant on your way you need not or should not kill it. But when the ants come to trouble you persistently you are justified in killing them. There are some people who are so cruel in their nature that they take delight in killing. That is no good. When you are harmed by insects then it is permissible to kill them."

M.H.: "What about snakes?"

Papa: "Here there are many snakes and if they are poisonous they are killed. If we know that they are not venomous, we let them go. It is dangerous to allow venomous snakes to move about in the ashram where there are many people including children. It is better to despatch them to the other world so that they may get a better birth next life. It is believed that those who die here will get better birth because of the spiritual atmosphere. Better life means evolution to a higher life."

M.H.: "If man is a higher creation, those who stand in the way of his progress must be disposed of."

Papa: "Ramdas read in the newspaper yesterday about a young boy, who has around his body, neck and shoulders, very big snakes, some of which are venomous. Strangely, it seems that when they go to him, they do not harm him. The boy must

have some power in him that makes the snakes friendly with him. Ramdas had the experience of a serpent winding round his leg and licking his toe. No harm was done to him. Ramdas saw Ram in it. When Ramdas looked down, the serpent was slowly unwinding itself and was going away. Ramdas called it back. But it did not come. It came on the subsequent days and looked at Ramdas from a corner. It could not come near him as there were many people with Ramdas."

574. M.H. : "I was thrilled to read your experience during your travels
On fear in the Himalayas, where you were entering big caves and shouting 'Hari OM' to see if there were any wild animals in them."

Papa : "Ramdas had no fear at all. He wanted to see some wild animals face to face, but could only see them at a distance. Ramdas saw Ram in them and loved them. Where there is love there is no fear."

R.H. : "Fear is mostly imaginary and unnecessary. It causes a tremendous amount of trouble, agony and worry all through the world."

Papa : "When you feel there is something other than yourself, there is fear. When there is nothing other than yourself, whom are you to be afraid of?"

M.H. : "There are only a few who have attained that high stage."

Papa : "Only for such people there is no fear. For all others there is fear. Even in the case of those who have realised that there is nothing other than themselves, a sort of fear seems to persist. That is only a nervous reaction. Somehow they are perturbed when they see something fearful or dangerous. A little later they are surprised and wonder why and whom they are afraid of, when everywhere there is none other than themselves or God.

"Still why should this body react like that? This fear is only a reaction of the nerves, not of the heart or mind. Some people who have conquered that also, are absolutely fearless."

R.H. : "Some are afraid because they imagine so many things."

Papa : "When fear is in the mind, the person is weak. Ramdas in his old life, that is before God took him up, was afraid of snakes. But later when the serpent wound round his leg he was in divine ecstasy. He was not at all afraid. On the other hand, he was happy when the snake was there. Ramdas extolled it to the skies for its love for him. Many people have asked Ramdas why God created the wild beasts, snakes and other insects. Ramdas's answer to them was : 'If the wild animals and insects could speak they would ask what business God had in creating man who kills them'."

**Limits to
ahimsa**

Papa: "We cannot practise ahimsa to its extreme. Mahatma Gandhi was a votary of ahimsa. Once in his ashram at Sabarmati a serpent came inside and was killed by a sannyasi who belonged to the Arya Samaj but was with Gandhiji then. When Gandhiji came to know of the incident, he asked the sannyasi why he killed the serpent when the rule in the ashram was to practise ahimsa. The sannyasi replied that the serpent was venomous and, if let free, would bite the ashramites. But Gandhiji held to his own opinion that killing the serpent was a mistake, and that the sannyasi ought to have refrained; and that such persons had no place in his ashram. Soon after, the sannyasi left the ashram. Some years later Mahatma Gandhi started his campaign and the British Government arrested him and put him in jail. There he developed appendicitis and had to undergo an operation. One day after the operation, this sannyasi went to see him at the hospital and asked Gandhiji, "What is it that you have done? By getting operated you have allowed many bacilli to be killed and destroyed. Why did you permit it?" He thus got an occasion to corner Mahatmaji. Do you know what reply Gandhiji gave? That he was afraid of death. You will find it is easy to preach but most difficult to practise. Non-violence is not non-violence in all conditions. We should not deliberately harm anybody. Some people rejoice at the sufferings of others. That should not be our nature. Suppose there are people or animals who are in distress. Let us help them. Let us love them. But if you see serpents going inside houses and biting people, then you should send the serpents away, not outside merely, but to the other world. Otherwise the serpent will send you all to the other world, if there is an other world."

**Microcosm
and
Macrocosm
are one**

Papa: "The whole thing is within you. You are the all-pervading and eternal Reality. In that all the worlds are contained. In that sense there is no world outside us. Therefore, Ramdas says, there is heaven, there is hell and there is purgatory. But all these are within ourselves."

M.H. : "Is that also not without? We are the microcosm and the universe is the macrocosm."

Papa: "Microcosm and macrocosm are one. Jiva and Siva are one. Individual soul and the cosmic soul are one. They are not different. But we make a difference between them. That is ignorance. So everything is within us. The cowherds complained to Yasoda that her foster-child Sri Krishna had eaten mud. Taking Krishna by the hand and chiding him, the mother asked, 'Why did you eat mud?'

Thereupon Krishna protested and denied the charge and opened his mouth for her to see. The mother saw the whole universe in it and was aghast. God fills the universe and is also beyond it. Such a God is within us. Then, is not the universe within us?"

M. H. : "I know microcosm and macrocosm are one. But they are separate also. Do not all the parts make the whole?"

Papa : "So long as you think you are the individual soul you see the whole world outside you. When you know God is within you, then all the worlds are within you."

M.H. : "I know that. Still I see them outside."

Papa : "You can see them within and without. You have projected yourself as the universe. So you are everything and everything is in you."

LVI

Anandashram, October 16, 1957

577. The talks turned to Papa's travel in America and his visit to the
Love is the Milk Farm near Seattle. Papa told Mildred that he had seen the best
greatest thing cows in that farm.

M.H. : "When we talk about cows, I remember they worship cows in India. I had difficulty in knowing its significance. The answer came from my master who explained that the cow is the second mother on earth. As soon as the child stops getting mother's milk, it starts getting cow's milk. For that reason Indians worship the cow as a goddess."

Papa : "In the ashram also we worship cows."

M.H. : "Do you believe in the worship of cows ? You say we should worship God alone."

Papa : "We worship God in the cows. It is only a ceremony. On a particular day in the year all the cows are given nice bath, are decorated with garlands and other coloured marks, and given some sweets also."

M.H. : "In America we have the Fathers' day, Mothers' day and Children's day. Here you have Cows' day."

The talks suddenly drifted to astrology. Papa talked something in general about astrology and added : "It seems some astrologers have predicted that Ramdas will be living up to 103 years. It means another thirty years."

M.H. : "It will simply be wonderful."

Papa : "These people here have taken upon themselves the task of making Ramdas live as long as possible in this body."

M.H. : "Everything is possible for God."

Papa : "God may be willing to preserve this body through their care and service."

M.H. : "Your statement to me will apply here, that if the wish of the devotees is intense, God will fulfil it."

Papa : "You must wish with a pure and loving heart, rather with a heart full of faith. Faith is very important. What is the greatest thing in the world? Hope, faith or love? Love is the greatest. That is how the book *The Greatest Thing in the World* starts. Faith is great. Hope is greater. But love is the greatest.

"During his stay in Los Angeles Ramdas happened to visit the house of a lady who was a psychiatrist. Ramdas talked to a small group there for some time. He told them that there is a science which is greater than psychiatry. That is spirituality. It can do wonders. Psychology is only about the mental, but spirituality is of the supramental or spiritual plane. We must go beyond the mind to infinity and eternity. Then alone we will come by the true power to do good to humanity and heal them. The lady listened to Ramdas with interest and said at last that she agreed with Ramdas. Before we left that place a young man who was present there gave Ramdas a Uranium Detector as a gift. It is here now, but it is not working as there is no battery available. After we brought it here we tested a lot of stones for uranium, but could not find any. Uranium you have to find within the heart and that uranium is God. Mind is the instrument to detect that and when the uranium is detected, the instrument is discarded. When you have found God, the mind as such is discarded."

578.

M.H. : "How many years did it take you to realise God?"

**Papa's sadhana
and its
fulfilment**

Papa : "It took him three years. But the search was tremendous. He had no thought of anything else. The whole mind was concentrated on God and he was dead to the world, and in that search he was happy as if he had got Him. After getting Him, the search disappeared—the seeker disappeared—and there has never been a cessation of God-experience. Ramdas was feeling His presence even when he was only searching for Him and trying to reach Him. When he reached Him the seeker disappeared and there was only God."

R.H. : "That has been the state ever since, is it so?"

Papa : "Yes. Ramdas was feeling in his sadhana days just like a child being guided by the mother. All along the way he was feeling happy. After reaching Him the child disappeared in the mother. There was only mother, only God inside, outside and everywhere. There was nothing but God. The servant became the Master and the child became the Mother. What a wonderful thing in three years! After that he went round everywhere telling people to find God within themselves, to remember Him by taking His holy Name and not run after the useless and perishable things of

the world. With worldly enjoyments, you crave for more and more. There is no contentment. When you find God within you, all your desires are fulfilled, whereas there is no fulfilment of your ambitions for external things."

M.H. : "I know, Papa. Worldly things mean nothing to us now. All we want is God."

Papa : "When you find God there is peace and fulfilment of all desires. All the rivers flow towards the ocean and become one with the ocean. Till the river reaches the ocean it goes on making all sorts of sounds and taking devious courses through hills and rocks. When it reaches the ocean it finds perfect union, is quiet and is at peace. God is the ocean. Let us go and meet and be lost in it. Then our life mission is fulfilled."

Having been immersed in conversation, they lost count of time. Coffee and tea arrived which brought them to the consciousness of time and space.

M.H. : "What is the time now?"

R.H. : "Quarter past three."

M.H. : "Ah I"

Papa : "When we enjoy intense happiness we do not know how time passes. When we talk about God and merge in God we transcend time and space. Therefore it is said Infinity and Eternity is Amrita—the sweetest thing. Bliss is Amrita. Eternal joy is Amrita. Eternal joy is God."

R.H. : "We spend hours together talking about God and losing count of time."

M.H. : "We used to talk about God and sometimes we were so much absorbed in Him that our physical bodies would disappear, as it were, and there would be only waves and waves of light between us. This happened many times."

Papa : "When Ramdas was in Limbdi, the Thakore Sahib would take him to his palace every morning. Ramdas would go on talking. The Thakore Sahib was so much absorbed that he forgot everything else. One day when he looked at the watch, it was past twelve although he was due at Court at eleven. He suddenly got up saying, 'How fast time has passed I' In that bliss we forgot the body. We were above time and space.

"Some years ago when Ramdas was here in the ashram he got a wire from a friend asking him to be present at a function in his house and to bless the ceremony.

Ramdas sent a reply wire sending blessing and saying that Ramdas would be with them in spirit. But the friends were not satisfied. They wired again saying that they wanted him to be physically present."

R.H. : "Did they wire. 'Acknowledge Spirit. Please send body' ?" (*a roar of laughter*)

It was time to close the talks. All got up.

October 20, 1957

579. **A cradle ceremony** Sadhu Bhandasji, who would be leaving the ashram the following day, wanted to have a group photo taken with Papa, Mataji and some other ashramites. The photograph was taken at about 5 p.m. and after that, Papa, Mataji and almost all the ashramites started walking towards Mukund Rao's house to attend the cradle ceremony of the ten-day-old child of Radhe. Mataji had asked Sadhu Bhandasji, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton and all those present there to go with Papa. She said, "No separate invitation is necessary for you all as you are going with Papa." So it was a very large group that walked up to Mukund Rao's house. Many people including a number of children were already waiting there. Radhe and her husband Guru greeted Papa and Mataji and placed the baby at their feet, in the hall. Then the scene shifted to the room in which was a small beautifully decorated cradle. Papa was requested to sit on a chair near the cradle. Guru and Radhe together performed padapooja to Papa and requested him to put the child in the cradle. As soon as the baby was placed in the cradle, the face of the baby brightened and there was a strange glow in it. Mataji standing by the cradle, asked Papa to swing the cradle for a while. Many presents were given to the baby by those who had come for the occasion. Mataji with Papa's permission presented the child with a set of ashram books in English. Though in the beginning Papa was not in favour of presenting books to the baby who would not be able to make use of them for some years, he later agreed, as Mataji seemed bent upon it. There were about twentyfour books and two photographs, one of Papa and one of Mataji, all autographed. While autographing the books, Papa remarked, "This boy is going to be a great scholar. He is getting presents of books right from now." Mataji had already packed each book separately and given almost every person a book for presentation to the boy.

Presentation over, Papa went from the room and sat outside in the compound where prasad was distributed. The party returned to the ashram. Mataji with a few lady members stayed back.

October 21, 1957

Sadhu Bhandasji left for Coimbatore in the morning. In the evening a letter from Sadanand B. Nagarkatti intimated that H. H. Sri Swami Anandashram had consented to visit the ashram in the first week of December.

580. Go-pooja day. The cows were given a wash with warm water, decorated with garlands, worshipped and fed with sweets. Mataji was in the goshala, supervising the arrangements from the beginning. Later she called Papa to the goshala where Papa spent fifteen minutes.

Being Diwali day, a lot of crackers and so on were brought and distributed by Papa to about fifty children of the locality.

581. 2 p.m. Mildred and Ralph Hamilton were with Papa in his room. Papa had been reading to them interesting passages from some books. As they came and sat, he took the book *Ramdas Speaks* and started reading from it the conversation he had with the abbot of a monastery in Paris. In the course of the reading, Mildred asked Papa to tell her about his vision of Christ, which Papa did in detail. He said he had given a description of the vision to a Roman Catholic father in Geneva. He turned to the relevant page and read out the description. He said, "When Ramdas thinks of that vision Jesus seems to be sitting before him."

R.H. : "What was the expression of Jesus—sad?"

Papa : "No, it was perfect peace and serenity."

The reading continued for a while till Papa suddenly stopped and said, "Some people believe that there is more joy in longing for God than in actually meeting Him. The Sufis believe so. They only want to aspire after God but not to attain Him. They say that if one attains what one aspires to, due to familiarity, one loses all love for what is attained. They say, 'Oh Lord, let me pine for You all the time'. They quote the example of the herd of goats that run after drinking water. They see water at a distance and with all joy run there, reach the place and drink to their satisfaction. Now they have no more love for the water, for which they were craving so far. Standing in the water, they dirty it."

M.H. : "Papa, do you subscribe to the above view?"

Papa : "No, Ramdas does not believe in it."

M.H. : "Papa can be sure that we have as much love for you now as we had before we came to you."

Papa : "Because you do not consider this as your final experience. You want to get him full."

The reading went on for some time further. Papa stopped and said, "Everything happens for good."

R H. : "Even wars ?"

Papa : "Yes. Even wars are for good because they bring peace later."

M.H. : "Papa, these wars have not brought peace. There have been many wars recently and they never brought true peace."

Papa : "Now people do not want any more war. They want peace. This is the result of many wars that occurred. Ramdas has been watching the world situation. Lately the situation in Syria has been giving some anxiety. Now the tension has been eased a little bit."

R.H. : "This trouble is all due to the communist propaganda."

M.H. : "Just see what Russia did to the people of Hungary. What an amount of suffering they caused them."

Papa : "Russia has changed her policies now. She is also working for peace ; so also the other communist countries. We talk about the atrocities of the communist countries. We are not paragons of virtue. We have our own defects. We also do harm to ourselves. Let us remember the maxim : 'Keep your house in order before you find disorder in other houses. Judge not others lest ye be judged.' All right. These are all points outside our province. Let us continue the reading."

Papa finished reading the chapter relating to his talk with the abbot.

582. M.H. : "Papa, you told us a couple of days ago when we were
When killing talking about insects, that if they are troublesome, we may kill
helps the them and by so doing we are only helping them to evolve. But in
killed these passages you say that by killing animals we are retarding their
 evolution."

Papa : "You retard their evolution when you kill them out of hate and selfishness. But when you kill them with a feeling of oneness with God they evolve higher. You can have this feeling only if you have realised your oneness with God. Otherwise you kill out of hate and selfishness and thereby retard their progress or evolution."

M.H. : "How do you explain Jesus's words that man may use meat for the sustenance of his body ?"

Papa: "Before you eat meat you say grace. Before killing the animal you offer prayer to God. Then you are free from the effect of killing and the animals that are killed evolve higher. Here the killing and eating are done as a divine act. In Bengal and other places Hindus eat meat. They first offer the animal to God in the temple and then eat the same as sanctified food. This practice has however been stopped now as Gandhiji started a campaign to stop killing of animals as sacrifice in temples. *Bhagavad Gita* which appears in the great scripture *Mahabharata*, like a diamond encased in a golden case, gives us a clear idea of the subject. Arjuna was faced with a very serious problem. He had to kill his own relatives, gurus and close friends who were standing on the opposite side to fight. Here Sri Krishna, for the sake of establishing righteousness on the earth and for releasing millions of people from the tyranny and oppression of the evil-doers, taught Arjuna the Truth and asked him to fight them. But such killing by which the killer can remain unaffected, and the killed made to evolve higher, is possible only if the person who kills has known the Truth, that is, if he is a saint. All others who kill, do so out of selfishness and hatred."

M.H. : "What do you think then about capital punishment?"

Papa: "Wrong. You can put the criminals in prison or reformatory. They may be kept under restraint. Government can do such things. This will enable the criminals to transform themselves and become good citizens. They are not born criminals. Only harsh treatment from the public has hardened them and made them criminals. We must remember that not all criminals are behind the bars. There are many moving freely in society. We take them for good people; they appear humble, but at heart are most cruel. They harm people in a deceptive way and many of us are inwardly criminals.

"We have in the Hindu mythology an instance of a robber who was one of the worst criminals and who waylaid people and killed them after looting them. Later, the robber became the great saint Valmiki, because of his contact with Sage Narada. This was a most wonderful transformation. So if you want anybody to change from bad to good life, you must bring him into contact with a saint. By such contacts some persons suddenly change while some others change gradually."

October 24, 1957

583. Papa came to have a word with Mataji and sat on the seat in the veranda of the kitchen. Subbaram was with him. S. had gone to "Seek ye the kitchen!" Papa's room to bring a cup of water. When S. returned, he heard Papa laughing loud. He told S., "If you see God it is as good as your having seen everything else." S. could guess the remark was ironical and something funny had happened.

S : "Papa, what has happened ? What is the fun ?"

Papa : "A man came here just now and stood in front of the kitchen. Ramdas asked him what he wanted. He replied that he came to see the ashram. Then Ramdas told him that there were so many things to see on the other side. He did not care to listen to what Ramdas said. There was fine smell coming from the kitchen. He stood there like a statue, gazing at the kitchen. Then Ramdas thought he believed that if he saw the kitchen it was as good as having seen everything in the ashram !"

S. added : "First seek ye the kitchen and all else will be added unto you."

584. 2-30 p.m. Mildred and Ralph Hamilton entered Papa's room. **What should be done to see God** Papa was reading the *Reader's Digest* and a few books were on the teapoy at his side. There were two chairs in front of him. Mildred sat on one, but Ralph preferred to sit on the floor. Papa immediately sent for cushions from the bhajan-hall and Ralph sat on one. Papa started reading out a short article from the *Reader's Digest* which he liked as it dealt with God. Towards the close, Ralph remarked : "In recent years there has been a number of articles on spiritual matters in magazines, television and radio."

Papa : "Yes, it is true. Now people feel the need for God more keenly. Ramdas will read out to you something from the current issue of *The Vision*. See how they like our books. Perhaps Ramdas is blowing his own trumpet."

Papa then read, 'Appreciation by Western readers.'

1) "Just a note to thank you with all my heart for sending me *Ramdas Speaks Volume III*. I love every word of Ramdas's books. They are most enlightening and answer many questions for me."

2) "Thank you so very much for Vol. II of *Ramdas Speaks*. Ramdas's expression of utter love and esteem for God indicates his beautiful service to the needs of God's people. His heart is filled with love. This is what is meant by love—it comes into the hearts of all who serve the needs of others and in turn the server's need is taken care of too. . . ."

Papa closed the magazine and looked at Mildred with a beaming smile and asked, "How do you like that ?" He patted himself on the back for the credit given by the Western readers for his books. This act provoked so much laughter as to draw the attention of those in the bhajan-hall. When all were quiet, he said : "All credit goes to Ram. All glory is to Him. We are nothing. He is everything. When He handles us, we become everything."

Papa then took *The Book of Mirdad* and started reading from it at random. The passages were instructive and thought-provoking. He read, 'Those who do not find God in their heart. . . ' Finishing this sentence Papa turned his look towards the Hamiltons with his sweet smile and said, "We have to find God in our own hearts. There is no use running for Him here and there. No use worshipping Him outside us. Of course, external worship should, in course of time, help us to turn our mind within and find God there. But the end is not the external search itself. God is within us and we have to realise this truth. You must have heard of the musk-deer. It carries musk in its navel and thinks that the smell of the musk comes from somewhere outside. So it runs here and there to find musk but does not find it anywhere outside."

R.H. : "To see God within what should be done ?"

Papa : "One should pray to God within to reveal Himself. One should meditate on Him. First of all, one has to know and believe that God is within. Then only one can direct all one's prayers to Him within. The mind must be attuned to Him constantly. Then alone can He be realised in one's heart."

R. H. : "But meditation is difficult."

Papa : "Constant practice is necessary. In *the Bhagavad Gita* the same has been discussed. Arjuna, after hearing something about divine knowledge from the lips of Lord Krishna, asks the Lord how he can control the mind which is restless as the wind and hard to still. The Lord answers that it is, no doubt, difficult to control the mind but it is possible to do so with abhyasa and vairagya. Abhyasa means practice and vairagya is dispassion. You should have regular practice of the spiritual disciplines and you must have absolute dispassion for worldly things. You must be completely detached from them.

"Dispassion comes by discrimination. You must know that all these things in the world are perishable, and by attaching ourselves to them, thinking that we will be happy, we get nothing but sorrow and misery. The happiness that you get in the world is momentary and is always followed by unhappiness. So we must not run after these illusory things. Real happiness comes only from God. We must get detached from the worldly things and attach ourselves to God who is absolute bliss and peace. When our mind is attached to God it will think of Him constantly. Then meditation becomes easy. Steady and constant practice is also required to attain quicker results."

R.H. : "They may have to take several births to attain to that standard of meditation."

Papa : "No, no. Pray to God earnestly and He will come to your rescue. Of course, when you pray you must have that much faith. By His grace everything is possible. If man tries to succeed by his own effort, he fails. If he fails, so much the better for him because he learns that he is weak and helpless. In that helplessness God's grace will flow into Him. When we think we are capable of doing something, He will leave us to do it.

"In this connection Ramdas remembers a story. A devotee of Siva was passing through a forest. He had in his possession a few valuable articles. Seeing him, a robber wanted to waylay him. When the robber drew near, the devotee knew that he would be robbed of his valuables. He shouted aloud the name of Siva and cried for help. Siva was then talking to his consort Parvati in Kailas. Siva suddenly left Parvati and came away without telling her. But in a few seconds Siva went back. To Parvati's question, Siva explained : 'A devotee was in danger and called for My help. As I was going to him I saw him taking a stone in his hand and was about to fling it at the robber. When the devotee thought he could take care of himself I had nothing to do and so I came away.' You see how God is ready to come to our help when we call on Him in a state of helplessness. But if we have a trace of feeling that we can help ourselves He will not come to our aid."

585. Papa continued : "When we are talking about Siva and Parvati, **Aham** Ramdas will tell you something else. Siva used to go away from **Brahmasmi** Kailas leaving Parvati alone. He never felt sad that he had to go alone as he had realised his oneness with all beings and knew there was really no separation from Parvati. But Parvati did not have this experience. She felt lonely when Siva was away from her. One day she requested Siva to give her the same experience as he had, so that she also would not feel his absence. Siva agreed and asked her to sit for meditation in a particular posture and close her eyes. When she did so, he asked : 'What do you see in your mental vision' ?

Parvati : 'I see your form because you are the beloved of my heart.'

Shiva : 'Seeing my form is no good. You must take your mind deeper. What do you see now' ?

Parvati : 'I hear the sound OM.'

Siva : 'That won't do. When you hear the sound the hearer and the heard are separate. They must merge into one. Go deeper still. What do you see now' ?

Parvati : 'I see flashes of light.'

Siva : 'When you see light, the seer and the seen are separate. They must merge into one. Go deeper still. What do you see now' ?

There was no answer.

Siva asked again : 'What do you see now ? What do you see now ?'

"There was no answer. She had merged in the Infinite Existence of God, the universal Self. She no longer remained as a separate entity to say what she saw or heard. After some time when she returned to world-consciousness, the words 'Aham Brahmasmi' issued forth from her. She had experienced her absolute oneness with the Infinite Existence and could no longer feel the separation from Siva.

"What that absolute experience is cannot be described. Those who have experienced it know what it is, but they cannot tell others what it is. It cannot be expressed in words. In this connection Ramdas will tell you another story. There was a brahmin who had two boys whom he sent to the hermitage of a sage for twelve years for study. During their stay with their master the boys learnt everything and returned home. Their father called one of them and asked him to tell him what Brahman is. The boy went on quoting from the scriptures all that he could remember to tell his father about Brahman. The father then called the other boy and asked him the same question repeatedly. The boy kept silent. There was no answer at all. The father then said, 'Son, you have found Him, but your brother has not.' Brahman cannot be expressed in words. Those who have found Him do not try to explain what He is. They remain in silence. Silence is Brahman. OM is the first sound that rose from the bosom of the Infinite Existence of God."

As though to break the silence that ensued, a devotee asked a question about the scriptures and Papa answered at length, describing the events as having actually happened historically.

M.H. : "Papa, I would like to verify a revelation which God has given me. You speak of the scriptures as actual history of the places, people and events described. Is it not true as God has shown me that every scripture tells not only about the creation or expression of God in the form of the universe and various stellar systems but also that they tell the history of the evolution of every man from the human to the divine?"

Papa looked straight at M.H. and said in a very powerful voice : "You have made Him say it." She said afterwards that as Papa looked at her and spoke those words so forcefully, it was as though a bolt of lightning had gone right through the centre of her head. It was a great moment of Truth.

LVII

Anandashram, October 26, 1957

586. Morning. The platform under the banyan tree was being removed as Papa wanted that the same should be reconstructed at a higher level. When the masons came, Papa, who was sitting there as usual with a small group consisting of Sushilabai Chitalkar, Haresh and Jayman (all of whom had come from Ahmedabad two days earlier), shifted to the other platform under the peepul tree. It was noticed that the roots of the banyan tree had come out through the old platform wall. Keshav who looked after the construction work, asked Papa if he should cut off the roots as otherwise they might break the new platform also in course of time. Papa said, "Let Mataji be called. She will decide whether the roots are to be cut or allowed to break the walls." Mataji was sent for and Papa explained to her the position. She immediately said, "The roots may remain undisturbed." Papa then remarked, "Then they will break the new platform walls also." Mataji calmly replied, "Let them." Papa just blinked at her, not knowing what he was to say. After a while he asked, "If the roots are allowed to grow, don't you think that we will have to reconstruct the platform again and again, involving heavy expenditure, especially when we have decided to reinforce the surface with concrete?" Mataji : "Let the surface not be changed. Let us only level the surface and apply cow-dung. It will be all right for you all to sit on." Papa readily agreed to the suggestion. Mataji then added that the platform should be lengthened so as to bring it in line with the platform of the peepul tree. Papa agreed but suggested that instead of merely applying cow-dung on the platform, a small quantity, say, a bag of cement be used as it would look better. Mataji agreed and went away. Now the Hamiltons came and took their seats near Papa.

The sun was getting warmer. Papa suggested moving to his room. All got up. Just then a group of students with three teachers were seen at the gate. They came near Papa and bowed before him to pay their respects. They said they were coming from Nileshwar High School, and went towards the bhajan-hall. By that time all others in the small group had gone away and only the Hamiltons and S. were with Papa.

Papa said : "Children do not inform their parents when they go to their house, especially in India. So also these friends who are coming to their own house did not

consider it necessary to inform us in advance. Now Mataji will see to it that they are given coffee and food."

The attention of Mildred Hamilton was drawn to the beautiful tall trees on either side of the steps. She remarked : "How lovely those trees are ! What are they called ?"

Papa : "We call them Xmas trees. We got them from Bangalore."

S : "Their botanical name is Exelsa."

M.H. : "They grow so fine and tall."

R.H. : (*Pointing to Dr. Ramaswami's house*) "The tree in front of that cottage is leaning to one side."

Papa : "Because there was another plant on the other side, we removed that plant but it was too late. We must lean towards God like this or God must lean towards us."

M.H. : "When God is within us how can He lean towards us ?"

R.H. : "Within you He can lean towards you."

Papa : In advaita there is no leaning towards another. But when you feel you are a devotee, it is possible. Now Ramdas has found a new technique. He told it to friends when he was last in Bombay. He was telling them before, that they must surrender themselves to guru or God. Ramdas found nobody has been able to do it. The new technique is that as they look upon Ramdas as guru or God, Ramdas is going to surrender to them. Instead of the devotee surrendering to God, God is going to surrender to the devotee. Ramdas asks them to give him a small place in their hearts and he will take his seat there."

R.H. : "This is just like the Biblical saying, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock'...."

Papa : "Knock and it shall be opened."

R.H. : "No, it is the other way. He knocks and we have only to open to receive Him."

Papa : "Ah ; that is it !"

It was hot by then and Papa returned to his room.

**Women have
wonderful
faith**

2-30 p.m. In Papa's room. Papa was reading from the book *Jesus*. The Hamiltons and S. were listening. In the course of the reading he came across a sentence, 'Women are dull and empty-headed.' He stopped there and remarked: 'If Mataji were to hear this, she would say, 'Throw that book away'. She does not like women being condemned. Ramdas fully agrees with her. Women are definitely greater than men. They have wonderful faith. If a woman accepts a saint, she clings on to him even in severe and trying conditions unlike a man, who under the same conditions, denounces the saint and leaves him. Take the case of Jesus himself. Even Peter and other closest disciples denied him to save their own skin, whereas Mary and many other women stood before the Cross and wept. They confessed their faith in spite of the danger to their own life. They were not afraid of the danger. Ramdas has found the same thing in India. The devotees who belong to the so-called weaker sex are not really weak. They are the stronger sex. They are faithful and loyal to their Master to the last, while men drop away one by one. Men are doubting Thomases.

"Mataji is a great example. She has been clinging on to Ramdas for more than twentyfive years. She gave up her sons and everything, and came away to Ramdas with the only sari that she wore, and said: 'Papa, I have come to become yours.' Her worship is worship of Ramdas. Her heart is with Ramdas. Her God is Ramdas. She says she has no other God than Ramdas. For her, Papa is omnipotent, omnipresent and all in all. This is her belief. Many people who come here consider that Mataji is more evolved than Ramdas. Ramdas agrees with them. Her faith is so great that she has absolutely no thought of the morrow. She gives away freely. She calls Ramdas a miser. Even when we have a lot of dues to pay, she does not stop her charities."

R.H. : "And she feels Papa should find the money for her to spend."

Papa : "Yes. She comes and takes Ramdas to task if money is not forthcoming."

M.H. : "I am like her. I give away and father has to take care of the supply."

Papa continued reading and closed the book after finishing the chapter. He said : "This is a wonderful book. Ramdas has read this many times. Ramdas takes joy in reading it to others. This book was perhaps written in a state of ecstasy and great inspiration."

R.H. : "Will you please explain how the path of jnana takes one Vichara marga to realisation?"

Papa : "That path is called vichara marga or the path of discrimination. You discriminate between the Real and the unreal. Whatever is perceived is unreal and

that which is not perceived is the Real. In the so-called real that we see about us, of name and form, which is really unreal, we realise THAT as our real Self, by simply identifying ourselves with That. That which is apparent is unreal and the non-apparent, invisible, all-pervading Truth, is the Real. We call Him God. We identify ourselves with Him. It is not a path of devotion. The aspirant on the path of discrimination goes on dissociating himself from everything finally to identify himself with Truth or Self. He says, 'I am not the body. I am not the senses. I am not the mind. I am not the intellect. What then am I? I am the all-pervading Reality, birthless, deathless, changeless'. You keep up this consciousness always. By this practice you directly take your mind to this consciousness, and therefore they say that this is the direct path. Straightway start saying, 'I am God. I am God.' You are not to surrender ; you are not to take the name of God or sing His glory."

M.H. : "Have you not mentioned recently that jnana yoga must have bhakti also to get the fullest realisation ?"

Papa : "Bhakti is in the early stage of progress when you have a mode of prayer, meditation and so on for self-purification. After you have reached a stage you must directly realise that you are He. The guru tells you that you are God and asks you to meditate upon it. Ramdas started on the bhakti path and attained jnana. Jnana means realisation of God, realising that you are the Supreme Self. For a jnani God is the impersonal Reality, nameless, formless and changeless Spirit, not different from him. But a devotee gives a name and form to God and worships Him as separate from him. Ultimately, both paths lead to the same goal.

"In the *Bhagavad Gita* Sri Krishna says that the path of jnana is difficult, whereas the path of devotion is easy. Here you surrender yourself to God and merge yourself in Him and know that you are He. In the case of jnana you have all at once to take the mind to the impersonal Reality. To keep up this consciousness always is difficult."

R.H. : "There must be very rigorous discipline on the path of jnana."

Papa : "Yes. Jnanis prefer to live in solitude. They go to forests and remain alone. Bhaktas stay in their own homes and worship God."

589. M.H. : "What is Papa's opinion of jnana as compared to karma
The Yogas yoga ?"
are not
distinct

Papa : "In karma yoga you dedicate all your actions to God. Your heart must be open to God to be filled with infinite love for Him. Love for God means love for all beings and creatures. With the intellect, you have

to identify yourself with the Atman. So Ramdas does not think these three yogas or paths are distinct or separate. They form part of one 'poorna yoga—intellectual, emotional and vital. On the plane of action the body plays the part. On the plane of love heart plays the part and on the plane of wisdom head plays the part. By the combined effort of all the three you get the full experience of God in all aspects. God is eternal wisdom, infinite love and almighty power. Eternal wisdom flows through your intellect, infinite love through your heart and almighty power works through your body."

M.H. : "This is exactly what our Master has taught us."

LVIII

Anandashram, October 30, 1957

590. The two platforms under construction beneath the banyan and
'Tired of peepul trees were being raised. After some consideration Papa
writing decided that they must be made into one long cement platform
letters' and it was done accordingly. When Papa came up that way, after
 visiting the office, he remarked : "You see, we want money in
thousands. Money coming in dribblets won't do. Ram has now to wake up and
send the necessary money. He is sleeping now. That won't do."

Papa had been reading from various books to the Hamiltons between 2 p.m. and 2-30 p.m. In the afternoon he started reading from the November issue of *The Vision* just received from the press. Krishna Iyer and Ganga were also present. Before reading Papa remarked : "There is a poem written by John Roebuck, in which he says that God has given us the power to see how others see us. We are always looking at us only from our own angle. We must know how others look at us. Ramdas is going to read out something written by Prasanna (Mrs. Jean Herbert) of Geneva about Ramdas. Ramdas did not like very much to read it out himself as others might consider him a conceited fellow. So saying he burst into laughter in which all joined.

Papa read out the long article and a few others from the journal. After he had finished reading, Ralph Hamilton took it from him. On opening it he found a slip of paper pasted to it, on which was printed the following :

"The readers of *The Vision* are hereby informed that Swami Ramdas's general health continues to be fairly good. He is not observing mauna or silence. He is normally active, but as complete rest is considered necessary he has stopped touring for three years and correspondence for the future."

R.H. : "You say you have stopped touring for three years and correspondence for the future. Do you mean to say you are not going to write letters at all in future ? That will be terrible for the devotees !"

Papa : "Ramdas has been writing letters for the past twentysix years to friends and the copies of all these thousands of letters are kept in hundreds of files. He has given in his letters and books whatever he has to say. He has exhausted himself and he has nothing more to say. The same people are writing over and over again on the same subject. They just do not follow the instructions but go on asking him more questions. Ramdas feels that they should now, instead of writing letters, have Ramdas in their mind and be in tune with him. When friends come to the ashram Ramdas will talk to them and they can ask him all the questions they have. Ramdas is tired of writing letters."

M.H. : "What about the new devotees to whom you have not written so far?"

Papa : "Let them come here and see Ramdas."

M. H. : "But all cannot afford to. They just don't have the means to come."

Papa : "That is not correct. If they have intense aspiration God will help them to come."

M. H. : "As in my case."

Papa : "Yes, Ramdas had some time ago decided not to give lectures or speeches. He felt that people should get spiritual strength and get transformed at his very sight. There were such cases too."

M. H. : "Suppose people write to you. Don't you reply to them at all ? Are you asking S. to write on your behalf ?"

Papa : "Ramdas asks him to send replies and gives him some hints here and there. He sends the replies all right."

M. H. : "From what you are doing one may wrongly think that you are going to drop the body. Devotees may be anxious."

Papa : "People are anxious. They write letters enquiring after Ramdas's health."

M. H. : "Are you going to write another book ?"

Papa : "No. He has already written in his books what he has to say."

M. H. : "Then your stopping the work is perhaps to give me the strength to start on my writings. I have been trying to put in writing my visions and other experiences. But I have not been able to make a start yet. I felt this morning that I have come here to get the fullest spiritual experience."

Papa : "You will get it. That is what you have come here for, thousands of miles from your home. You are being prepared for it and you will get the experience you have been longing for. You can put all your experiences in books for the western people. You will be a great spiritual force to guide people in America, God will make you a blazing and powerful instrument to spread His message in America."

M. H. : "May it come to pass by your blessings !"

Papa : "Yes, it will."

M. H. : "I have been anxious to get a start on my writings. I know I am doing God's will."

Papa : "When you allow things to work according to God's will you will have nothing to worry about. He will bring about everything at the proper time. You need not be anxious at all. You have only to remember Him constantly and meditate on Him."

M. H. : "There is no moment when He is out of my thoughts."

Papa : "That is good."

November 6, 1957

591. It was a pleasant morning with light drizzle after heavy showers
Why saints overnight. Papa along with D. G. Karanjgaokar, P.V. Subramania
meditate Iyer and S. was inspecting the construction work of the platform.
 There was some casual talk ; otherwise the party was silent, each
lost in his own reverie, as if to break it Papa asked : "Do you find any change
in Ramdas since he started sitting for meditation in the mornings ?"

Nobody answered for a while as the question was a little thought-provoking.

P.V.S. : "Papa's presence is inspiring and helpful to the devotees who come for meditation."

S : "I thought Papa's question was not relating to the help devotees get, but the change in himself. There is no doubt about the help which devotees get."

There was silence again and Papa's question was not answered. After a while Papa said : "How Ramdas's coming for meditation helps others may also be considered. But about himself, he feels that after he started meditation he feels more indrawn. He feels more unconcerned with things. That must do others good. He has nothing to gain for himself."

P.V.S. : "We read in the books that Sri Krishna was also regular in his daily meditation."

Papa : "Is that so ? How do you know ?"

P.V.S. : "That is mentioned in the books."

Papa : "That was for the good of the world. In the case of Ramdas he finds that by sitting for meditation he keeps his body fit and will therefore be more useful to the world."

S : "So do you mean to say that your meditation is only helpful to the physical part of your being ?"

Papa : "Yes. He finds that he is able to talk more clearly or, shall Ramdas say, there is more transparency in him."

S : "Papa mentioned something about being indrawn. People who have not attained Truth meditate so as to be in tune with the Reality and by such practice enter into a state of nirvikalpa samadhi or divine consciousness. Saints are those who have experienced nirvikalpa samadhi and are established in it. That being so, where can they take their mind farther than that ?"

Papa : "The purpose of saints sitting for meditation is only to throw more light and power on others. They have nothing to gain for themselves. They withdraw the mind from the manifestations and make it still. Ramdas will be able to keep his body in a better condition by meditation on his own initiative. He is prompted by Ram to fulfil His own purpose. Even if he does not sit for meditation he is all right. During the tours, for months together, he was not meditating. During the world tour, there was no bhajan either. But he was in no way the worse for it. Even in the ashram, when he was ill he was not sitting for meditation. He started it only recently. The body must be fit to transmit the power of God. If the body is ill, it is no good."

S : "Should all saints then regularly meditate ?"

Papa : "Not for themselves, but for others."

S : "Is that the reason why some saints never give up meditation all their life, even after they have attained the goal ?"

Papa : "Must be. There may be also some who have not attained the fullest spiritual experience. In the case of Ramdas, he has had no meditation now for years together. During his sadhana days he had prayed to Ram to give him His vision and make him wear his body out in His service. He has recently been praying

that Ram may make his talk less, but make him so radiant and dynamic that those who come near him should be elevated and given the experience of the Divine presence."

592. P.V.S. now reminded Papa of his intention to go to the rooms of Mildred the Hamiltons. Papa immediately got up and the whole group except Hamilton P.V.S. walked towards the new building (Lalitha Devi building) and entered the room. Ralph received Papa near the entrance and took and her experiences him and others with him to the adjoining room which he called his 'sitting room', where Mildred greeted Papa and asked him to sit on the sofa that was recently sent to them. Papa remarked : "Oh, this is a fine sofa. You can sit on it even for meditation." He then sat cross-legged on the sofa. All others also sat, some on the chairs and some on the cot.

Papa : "We were talking about Ramdas's sitting for meditation in the mornings nowadays."

Papa then told them the gist of the conversation and continued : "Ramdas was praying to Ram that he must have so much power and radiance that those who came before him must get spiritually illumined."

M.H. : "I feel that already when I sit before you."

Papa : "See, your face is so radiant and full of joy, your eyes how bright they are !"

M.H. then took some typed sheets of paper from her table and said, "This is what I noted down when S. could not be with us one afternoon and when you said the most wonderful things. I wanted to give this to S. for his record." She then read out the typed matter containing Papa's talk with her on the 5th November.

"I had asked Papa about the various states of samadhi and from that subject he went on to talk about the various sadhanas necessary in order to have complete self-realisation, stressing the need for the spiritual aspirant to be quiet and alone at times so that he might meditate uninterruptedly upon God.

"As he went on talking about the various practices and the stages one goes through in order to attain, I tried to determine, after thinking over the events of my own busy life and the fact that I had had but very little opportunity to do any of the things which he said were necessary, just what my actual state of development was ; so I said : 'Papa, I have never had the opportunity to do any of the things you have said, yet in spite of the fact that I could seldom sit in meditation, the bliss of God has filled me so greatly that I have been almost helpless in it. Will you please tell me what state of development I am in ?'

"How can mere words describe the radiance which appeared on his face — the wistfulness and the look of ineffable love and tenderness? In the pause that followed, he put his hands together as he does when he is filled to overflowing with bliss and said like a small shy boy: "Ramdas can only tell you that you are his divine mother. He sees you as the very embodiment of God's light. You are a shining being spreading your love, light and bliss on all." For a moment the whole world stood still as I got the full impact of his words and of the Spirit within him, realising that here from the lips of God Himself was the verification of what He had told me when I was in samadhi. In the suspended state in which I found my consciousness it seemed as though this was at once both my destiny and its fulfilment. When finally I could speak I said, 'I feel that I have attained God but the terrible way of the Cross over which I have come remains in my consciousness and makes me doubt. God has revealed to me the inner Truth about much of the scriptures. What about the rest of them; do I not still have to receive that?' And he replied, 'Forget the scriptures. You have risen far above them. It is not necessary for you to follow the practices laid down for others. The scriptures are only for the benefit and guidance of those who are still on the path. Let the love of God overflow within your being, to enlighten others. He will use you to give His truth, His wisdom and His love to all with whom you come into contact.' I said, 'You mean He will supply the rest of the knowledge of the scriptures as they are needed.' He answered, 'God's grace has come to you through your guru. He is working through you to do all things.'

"That morning my husband had expressed doubt about his own ability to realise God and I had assured him that he would. However, to verify my own feeling about it and also for his satisfaction I said, 'Papa, Father doesn't believe he will receive full enlightenment and I have told him that he will. Is this not true?' He answered, 'Yes, it is true.' Then looking at him, he said, 'How could it be otherwise when you have come here so humbly, so sincerely and with such a pure heart?' Then he added, 'You should be very happy to have such a wife.' And then, with just a breath of a pause, he turned to me and said, 'You should also be very happy to have him as a husband.' We both assured him that such was our feeling and he beamed at us with joy.

"Each precious moment spent in Papa's presence is like a gift from Heaven; but today, because of the words that were spoken, it seemed as though God, through His infinite love and mercy, graciously stooped down and, like a little child, offered me the gift of Himself."

She finished reading, placed the typed notes back on the table and said: "Now I want to ask you a question. Father (Ralph) says that Papa sees all women as the divine mother and that there is nothing special if he says so in my case. What do you say about it?"

Papa laughed and kept quiet for a few minutes. He looked at Ralph, then at Mildred, at Karanjgaokar and S. Then he looked down smiling. All the while, others were eagerly waiting for him to speak, wondering what his answer would be. They were not kept in suspense for long. Papa raised his head. His face broadened into a smile. He said : "He (Ralph) is right in a way. All of you are God. Ramdas looks upon all women as the forms of the universal Mother. But when you (*turning to Mildred*) asked the question, the reply was suitable for the occasion. When Ramdas looks at others he does not see merely their exterior. He sees deep within them all the divine spirit— God. By so doing alone Ramdas can awaken God in others. That is God seeing God. That is the truth. Ramdas knows that it is God only who has assumed all these forms in the universe. He is the guru and He himself is the disciple. As a disciple, He pretends that he is ignorant and asks to be guided by the guru. As a guru He pretends that he has realised, and guides the disciple. The whole world is a pretence. We must see Him alone in all the forms."

593. Papa : "Some friends come and ask Ramdas whether they are
Ramdas like progressing or not. As Ramdas has already told you, he does not see
a mirror the exterior of these persons. He sees them as God. So he tells
 them, 'You are He. Why do you pretend that you have to attain
 anything ? Give up the pretence.'

"It is not that Ramdas cannot understand or gauge the progress of the devotees. It is possible. But he does not tell them because there is a great danger in doing so. If he tells them that they have advanced, they become proud, and pride goes before a fall. If he tells them that they are not, they feel dejected and even give up their efforts to realise Him. In either case there is danger.

"Ramdas is like a mirror. All saints are. You see in him your own reflection. Whatever answers he gives are words put in his mouth by yourself because it is you who make him talk. If you come before him with an open mind, revealing the Self in you, you will see the Self in Ramdas. When you put a question to Ramdas you are for the time being raised to that level and therefore that reply comes from Ramdas."

M.H. : "Father (Ralph) still feels that the ego in me has not yet been crucified."

Papa : "Others' opinions about us need not be always correct. Nobody can understand another. God alone can understand us. We cannot understand saints from what they talk or do. We must know them only from what they are. Only God can know them. You must, both of you, become spiritual dynamos. You must be able to radiate peace and joy wherever you go in America and lead people on the path of God."

R.H. : "But when are we to get started ?"

Papa : "It is already started, even from Seattle."

R.H. : "I do not feel so."

594.
Ralph's experiences Papa : "Feel or not, it is there. Whenever Ramdas gets occasion, he tells Mataji the gist of our conversations. Yesterday Ramdas told her that both of you are happy here and are getting the expected benefit. She was writing Ramnam. She suddenly stopped writing and told Ramdas, 'It is very good. Please see that they are fully satisfied and return home with the fullest spiritual experience and all doubts cleared.' See how anxious she is. Even when she is looking after your material comforts carefully, her heart is on your spiritual progress."

M.H. : "Yes, Papa. I can feel it. I love her so much that I know I am one with her. Krishna Iyer who was present during the talks the other day, came here the morning after and said that he wanted to worship the divine Mother. He then prostrated before me, falling flat on the ground, when a spiritual vibration ran through my body with wonderful effect. I asked him to worship God in himself and not anybody outside."

Papa took out his watch and seeing that it was nearing 11 a.m. said, "Ramdas must go now. Mataji will be waiting for him." He got up. Ralph was very much moved by the talks ; so were the others. He stood looking at Papa with folded hands. Papa went near him, put his arms around him and gave him a warm embrace. Disentangling his arms, he patted Ralph's chest with his right hand. Ralph's eyes were moist. He stood there still as if dazed. Papa and the two others left for Papa's room.

At 2 o'clock, when Mildred and Ralph came to sit with Papa as usual, Mildred said : "Papa, do you know what a wonderful thing you have done ? After you embraced father, he was laughing for a while, then crying, and finally he sat and went into samadhi. For an hour and a half, he sat motionless. He had his hands in this posture (mudra)."

Papa (*smiling*) : "Ramdas expected this report. He expected it and he wished for it."

Papa then patted Ralph on the back and placed his right hand on his head.

R.H. : "Papa, it was wonderful. Will it stay with me ?"

Papa : "Ramdas will give you another embrace so that this experience may remain permanent with you. But it may not be necessary."

M.H. : "I was feeling sorry he alone got the experience. Will you not some day put your arms around me?"

Papa : "Ramdas shall some day place his hands on your head. That will do."

November 7, 1957

595. It was the day of Kartik Purnima, the renunciation day of Mataji, the Silver Jubilee of which was celebrated two years ago. The day was not celebrated in the ashram every year.

Do not externalise your mind by a show of service

 Around 7 p.m., S. went to see Mataji in the kitchen. She was then taking iddli and milk while the ashramites and other visitors in the dining-hall and the veranda were having their meal. S. sat by her side. Mataji started talking about the departure of Kogganna a couple of days earlier. She was, as a mother, anxious about him. She wondered why she should have got angry that time, as she had been very successful in calmly dealing with him for the past fifteen years. He had left the ashram twice before in anger and she did not want to create another occasion for him to go away in a huff. In spite of that, it happened again.

Just then, Y. brought and showed Mataji a plate of lozenges which he wished to distribute to the devotees as prasad after bhajan, that day being the renunciation day of Mataji. Mataji's face showed that it did not please her. When he had taken a few steps backwards with the idea that he had obtained Mataji's consent for the distribution, Mataji quietly told him, "Why are you again and again doing things exactly contrary to what I wish you to do? That is not going to do you any good. Who wanted you to do anything special today? Are we celebrating this day every year? Instead of taking your mind inward, why do you still externalise it? I would have been happy if you had written or repeated more Ramnam today. You do not care to do that. You only want to show to everybody that you have done something and thus get name and fame. This does not please me. Instead of spending money on lozenges you could have given it to some poor man. Yesterday when I asked you to send a letter to Kogganna's wife by express delivery, you forgot to do so. This money could have been used to send her a telegram." Without a word Y. went to the bhajan-hall with the plate of lozenges.

596. There was an eclipse of the moon from 6-15 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Lunar eclipse Orthodox brahmins would not take any food during the eclipse and for four or five hours earlier in order to keep the stomach empty during eclipse. They would perform special prayers and so forth on the occasion. Krishna Iyer had asked Mataji that afternoon whether eclipse was an occasion for any

observance in the ashram. She had given a negative reply. He however desired to have his food early. Mataji forgot to pass on the information to the kitchen.

Krishna Iyer was coming towards the place where Mataji was standing. Calling him near, she told him : "Now we must go beyond all these observances. Such things are all right for those who are on the lowest rung of the ladder. They all have to be given up when you advance and then, for you, there will be no such thing as auspicious day or inauspicious day. All days are equally auspicious. So many things happen in nature as a matter of course and such happenings cannot make the day good or bad."

Krishna Iyer : "People observe eclipse days as special days because they say that period is most favourable to prayer and meditation."

Mataji : "That is not for you all. You should not still cling to or depend upon favourable or unfavourable hours for meditation. All hours should be favourable. You are supposed to remember God all the time—all the twentyfour hours of the day and all the days of the year. How can you then wait for a favourable time?"

Krishna Iyer : "By your grace alone I must be able to go beyond all these."

Mataji : "Papa's grace is there."

November 8, 1957

597. 7-30 a.m. Mataji was having her breakfast in the dining-hall along with S. and a few other ashramites. Krishna Iyer who had performed, **You get only what you pray for** a few minutes earlier, padapooja to Papa came in with some flowers and a garland on a plate to worship Mataji. Krishnananda Swami followed with a small vessel containing pada-tirtha which was handed over to Mataji. She drank a little from it and distributed a spoonful each to others present there. After taking the tirtha, Krishna Iyer placed some flowers at Mataji's feet, garlanded her and made a dandawat namaskar placing his head at her feet. Getting up, he stood before her with folded hands and prayed, "O Mother, bless me with bhakti, give me bhakti." He repeated the same prayer thrice and Mataji assured him that Papa had given him all blessings. Krishna Iyer then left the hall happy.

There was a peculiar smile on Mataji's face. She wanted to say something, but she seemed uncertain whether to say it or not. Noticing that, a devotee sitting near Mataji told S., "Mataji wants to tell you something."

S : "She will tell me if she wants to."

Devotee : "She seems to be hesitating to say. Perhaps she does not like others to hear." S. looked at Mataji and asked her if she really wanted to say something.

Mataji : "When Krishna Iyer came and prayed that he might be blessed with bhakti, I felt why he should ask only for bhakti. You keep asking God to give you bhakti, jnana and so on one by one. By the time you get a chance to ask Him to take you and to absorb you in His own Being, you will have dropped this body and taken another birth. Instead of asking for these one by one, why not straightway pray for completely merging in Him?"

S : "We may ask for anything. When you know what is best for us, why don't you grant us that? If we ask for bhakti and you know that we should have prayed for merging in you, why should you not give us that at once?"

Mataji : "That is not possible. You will get only what you ask for. If we give you something more than you ask for, you cannot digest it. You may not even accept it. Take for example what happened yesterday. I gave you two pieces of halva. You ate only one and gave the other away to Lingappa. You could not eat all that I gave."

S : "The question of eating is different. If we overeat the stomach revolts."

Mataji : "Ah! That is exactly so. If we give you anything more than what you ask for, your mind will revolt."

S : "I feel you should give it to us even if our mind revolts."

Mataji : "That is not possible. You must prepare yourself to receive it. Instead of wishing for one thing after another, wish for the highest attainment."

S : "Suppose we do not ask for anything, but leave you to give us whatever you think best."

Mataji : "If you do so, it is all right. But who is doing it? Mere saying with the mouth won't do. You must feel it. How many are prepared for that?"

December 1, 1957

598. **Swami Anand-ashram's visit** His Holiness Srimad Swami Anandashram was the ninth head of Sri Chitrapur Math in Shirali, North Kanara in the Karnataka State. The Math had been ministering to the spiritual needs for over two hundred years of the small but highly cultured community of Saraswats to which Pujya Papa and Mataji belonged. Both had evinced keen interest in and felt deep loyalty to the Math and the gurus who had adorned it; Mataji, especially, took every opportunity that came her way to visit the Math for the darshan of the spiritual head. Both had frequently paid their respects to Srimad Pandurangashram Swamiji, the predecessor and guru of the present Swamiji who was, at that time, fiftyfive years old and whom they had known from his initiation into sannyas about the age of twelve.

As the Swamiji was to visit the Ashram that day, excitement, gaiety and fervour filled the atmosphere. The ashram grounds had been gaily decorated with festoons, flowers, arches and coloured lights. Over three hundred devotees had gathered to welcome Sri Swamiji and were eagerly looking at every car passing along the main road, keeping up a chatter on varied topics while the children played about. To provide a better atmosphere, someone started singing Ramnam which caught up, filling the air with spiritual vibrations.

A car turned towards the ashram and stopped around the Ram chakra and from it stepped out a saffron-clad, bespectacled, tall, fair, handsome, serenely-radiant figure, shod in wooden sandals, a half-smile playing on his lips. Papa received Sri Anandashram Swamiji and put a garland of tulsi leaves around his neck and touched his holy feet. Papa then led him to the asan in the bhajan-hall filled to capacity and again, making pranams, took his seat next to him. The assembled devotees in turn paid their respects to the Swamiji and garlanded him. Thereafter according to the Math custom 'deepa namaskar' invoking the blessings of the earlier heads of the Math was performed. Padapooja was conducted with the sastric rites by Sadanand Nagarkatti on behalf of the Ashram residents. Finally there was a half-hour bhajan which ended with arati. After receiving the obeisance of the devotees, the Swamiji with his retinue retired to their exquisitely decorated residence.

In deference to Ashram invitation, Sri Swamiji had visited the ashram in 1947 and stayed for three days. On their tours Papa and Mataji had never failed to call on Sri Swamiji and pay their respects to him if they happened to be at the same place. In view of the cancellation of Papa's tours for three years, they could not have the privilege of meeting Sri Swamiji. So Papa and Mataji invited His Holiness to visit the ashram once again which brought about his present visit.

During his week-long stay at the ashram His Holiness was fully engaged and had hardly any time to relax. Most evenings Sri Swamiji attended the bhajans in the bhajan-hall; he witnessed the film shows, specially screened for him, of Papa's world tour and so on; also he heard Srimati Sita Devi Padukone's discourse in Konkani on *Jnaneshwari*, the tape recording of Sri Swami Hariharananda Bharati's harikatha and the violin recital of Sri Ratnakar Bhat. Sri Swamiji also went round the several ashram buildings.

On Wednesday the 4th December, His Holiness spoke eloquently in Konkani stressing the importance of purifying oneself. He explained the nature of the Atman as Existence, Consciousness and Bliss and of anatma as name and form. Referring to transcendent worldly happiness, he said that that also sprang from the bliss of Atman and it was futile to search for pure, unalloyed happiness in the world as worldly happiness was always followed by its opposite. The real and eternal happiness was within them—in the Atman. Describing how a jnani would remain blissful, unaffected by worldly contacts, whereas the ignorant soul would be miserable, tossed about by

the pairs of opposites, he quoted Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's illustration of a dry cocoanut, the kernel of which was detached from the shell, while the kernel of a tender cocoanut broke along with the shell. He spoke in detail of the various approaches to the ultimate Truth—jnana yoga, raja yoga, bhakti yoga and karma yoga—and the difficulties common people would experience if they resorted to the path of jnana. The different paths, he clearly explained, could not be considered watertight compartments but that they were all correlated. One path alone to the exclusion of the others, he said, could not be practised. The discourse concluded with a prayer to the Lord to bless all for the attainment of eternal peace and happiness.

It would be difficult to render faithfully and in its entirety, into English his eloquent speech full of high and noble thoughts expressed with precision and brevity.

On the eve of the departure of His Holiness for Calicut, Sadanand performed padapooja on behalf of the ashram residents. On the morning of the 8th Sri Swamiji and party, after bhajan, left the ashram to board the train at 10 a.m.

Papa revelled in such meetings ; he would prostrate and touch the feet of saints and sannyasins in reverence. "Ramdas is after all their child. He has received countless namaskars and now finds occasion to pass them on to these noble souls. Sannyasins have showered their love on Ramdas and in the company of saints Ramdas fills a huge vessel with spiritual wealth, later to distribute among friends. He keeps the vessel replenished and permits it to be emptied," so would Papa say.

A large number of devotees had come from far and near, to share the rare privilege of having a dip in the holy Triveni Sangam, that is the ocean of bliss called into being by the blessed meeting of the holy trio — Srimad Anandashram Swamiji, Puja Papa and Mataji.

The meeting of saints is of immense significance. It helps to break down all man-made barriers and to guide aspirants to the only worthwhile goal of Self or God-realization. The atmosphere created by such a meeting seeps into the minds of devotees and inspires them to tread the noble path with steady steps.

सत्संगत्वे निस्संगत्वं
निस्संगत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् ।
निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलत्वं
निश्चलत्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः ॥

'From association with saints comes detachment from the world, from detachment springs freedom from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to one-pointed meditation on Truth, which in turn brings Jivanmukti (liberation in this life).'

OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

GLOSSARY

A

Aarta : Devotee seeking freedom from distress
Abhiman : Ego
Abhisheka : Pouring consecrated water over the head
Achintyarupa : Incomprehensible being
Adharma : Opposite of dharma; unrighteousness
Adhogati : Downward course
Advaita : Non-duality; school of philosophy declaring oneness of God, soul and the universe
Advaitin : Advocate of advaita
Agarbathi : Incense sticks, lighted especially during worship, joss-sticks
'Aham Brahmasmi' : 'I am Brahman'
Ahimsa : Non-violence; non-injury
Ajna chakra : The sixth centre in the sushumna (within the spinal column) through which the awakened spiritual energy rises to the brain
Ananda : Divine bliss
Ananya : One-pointed
Anatma : The non-self
Aparigraha : Non-receiving of gifts
Arati : Waving of lights before deities or saints and sannyasins
Asan : Seat
Asanas : see Yogasanas
Ashram : Abode of a saint
Ashramite : Resident of an ashram
Ashtotara : Short for Ashtotara sata namavali

Ashtotara sata Namavali : One hundred and eight names of God (garland of names)
Asteya : Non-stealing
Asuric : Demoniac
Aswattha : Peepul tree
Atharvana veda : One of the four vedas, the others being Rik, Yajur & Sama
Atma : Self
Atma-anatma vichara : Discrimination between the Self and non-self
Avadhuta : Holy person of great renunciation; usually one who goes about naked

B

Bala : Child, childlike
Bhagavad Gita : Song Celestial of Sri Krishna being the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra
Bhagavan : Form of addressing enlightened saints and sages; God
Maya : Cosmic illusion
Bhagavathar : One who performs bhajans or holds discourses on religious topics
Bhajan : Singing of hymns or chanting of God's name
...mandir : Place where bhajans are held
Bhakta : Devotee of God
Bhakti : Devotion
Bhramara : the large black bee
Bhasma : Sacred ashes; also purified ashes of metals used in medicine
Bhava : Attitude

Bhiksha : Alms; food offered to a sadhu
Bhikshu : One living on bhiksha
Bhogi : One indulging in sense-pleasures
Bhokta : Experiencer of pleasure and pain
Bhoodan : Gift of land
Bidi : Country cigarette
Brahmacharya : Spiritual discipline involving strict continence
Brahmakund : Spot in the Ganges at Hardwar, bathing in which during Kumbhamela is said to confer immortality
Brahman : The Absolute, Truth, Reality
Brahma muhurta : The holy period before dawn
Brahmastra : The ultimate in ancient Indian weaponry
Bunder : Sea-port

C

Chela : Disciple
Chidanandarupa Sivoham : I am Lord Siva, who is Absolute Consciousness, Bliss
Chit : Absolute Consciousness

D

Dandavat namaskar : Prostration in full length
Darshan : Meeting a holy person. Vision
Das : Servant
Dasabhava : Attitude as of servant to God
Dasaratha Rama : King Dasaratha's son, Sri Rama
Dassera : Hindu festival lasting ten days in the month of September–October when Shakti is worshipped as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati
Daya : Mercy
Devarshi : Godly person endowed with supreme Knowledge
Devata : Deity
Dhams : Places (of pilgrimage)
Dharma : Righteousness; the core of religion
...shala : Free resthouse, mainly for wandering sadhus

Dhoti : Cloth worn round the lower limbs
Dhun : Method of chanting (God's Name)
Dhyana : Meditation
Dosai : Cake made of rice and gram flour
Draupadi : Wife of the Pandavas
Durvasa : A great sage; he was renowned for being easily angered
Dvaita : Duality
Dvaitin : Follower of the philosophy of Dualism
Dvandvas : Pairs of opposites such as pleasure and pain
Dvandvatita : One free from the grip of dvandvas

E

Ekalasi : Eleventh day of the bright/dark halves of the moon, usually devoted to fasting and prayer

G

Gajendra : The elephant king saved by Lord Vishnu from the jaws of a crocodile
Ganesh : Elephant-faced God, remover of obstacles and bestower of success
Ganja : Indian hemp
Gayatri : Mantra for the worship of the Supreme
Gerua : Ochre
Godavari : A sacred river
Gopis : Milkmaids of Vrindavan; play-mates of Sri Krishna
Gorochana : An ayurvedic medicine
Go-pooja : Cow-worship
Go-seva : Service to the cow
Goshala : Cowshed
Grihasta : Householder
Guha : Forest chieftain, devotee of Sri Rama
Gunas : Three qualities—Satva (harmony), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (torpor)
Guru, Gurudev : Spiritual preceptor
Gurubhai : Brother disciple

Gurudakshina : Offering to the guru
Gurudwar : Temple of the Sikhs
Gurukula : Residence with the guru in his abode
Gurumantra : Holy formula given by the guru
Gurustuti : Song in praise of the guru

H

Hanuman : Sri Rama's devotee; minister to the monkey-king, Sugriva
 ...*mandir* : Temple where Hanuman is worshipped
Harikatha : Musical discourse on religious topics
Hatha yoga : School of yoga for the development of bodily fitness
Himsa : Violence; injury
Hingashtaka : Ayurvedic medicine for ailments of the stomach
Hiranyagarbha : Cosmic Intelligence; the highest created being
Homa : Vedic sacrifice wherein offerings to the deities are made in the fire
Hridayagranthi : Knot of the heart

I

Idli : A South Indian dish
Indra : Chief of the celestials
Indriyas : Senses
Ishta : Chosen deity

J

Jaikar : Shouts of 'Jai', meaning victory
Japa : Repetition of a mantra, generally the name of God
Jijnasu : Seeker of Truth
Jiva : Individual soul
Jivanmukta : One liberated while living in the body; a self-realised person
Jnana : Wisdom; Gnosis; Absolute Knowledge
 ...*yoga* : Path of jnana

Jnani : Person who has attained Jnana
 ...*bhakta* : Jnani who is a bhakta as well
Jhula : Cradle that can swing

K

Kabir : Medieval mystic, author of many devotional songs
Kali : Divine Mother worshipped under this name in a terror-striking form
Kaliya : Venomous serpent subdued by Sri Krishna in the river Jamuna
Kama : Lust; desire
Kanji : Gruel
Kanya : Virgin
Karma : Action; ritualistic worship
Karta : Doer
Kartik Purnima : Full-moon day occurring in Kartik month
Kesharbhath : Sweetened rice mixed with saffron
Khadi : Hand-spun and hand-woven cloth
Khir : Sweet pudding
Kinnara : Mythical being with horse's head and human body
Kirtan : Devotional song
Kripa : Grace
Kripalu : Bestower of grace
Kripa Rakhna : Be gracious
Kripa siddha : One illumined by the grace of God or Guru
Krishna : Avatar of Vishnu, the ideal of Vaishnavas; author of Song Celestial
Krishnarpanam : Dedication or offering to Sri Krishna the merit of any action
Krodha : Anger; wrath
Kumari : Unmarried girl
Kshirsagara : Ocean of milk
Kumbhaka : Retention of breath in pranayama
Kumbhamela : Festival, once in 12 years to celebrate Devas' drinking of nectar

Kumkum : Red powder whose basic ingredient is turmeric used in worship and by Hindu women to adorn their foreheads

Kundalini : Power at the base of the spine in the form of a coiled serpent

.. yoga : Yoga for raising kundalini from the base to Sahasrara in the head

Kunti Devi : Mother of the elder three of the Pandavas—Dharmaputra, Bhima and Arjuna

L

Laddus : Sweet balls

Lakshmana : Brother and constant companion of Sri Rama

Lanka : Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

Likhit japa : Mantra japa in writing

Lila : Play of the Divine

Lobha : Greed

M

Mada : Pride

Mahalaya Amavasya : An auspicious new-moon day in the Hindu calendar (almanac)

Mahant : Head of a Hindu religious institution

Maharshi : Great rishi ; Seer of Truth ; Great Sage

Mahasamadhi : Final merger in Absolute with no return to corporeal consciousness

Mahatma : Great soul ; noble person ; sage

Maidan : Meadow

Mala : Rosary

Malpuri : Wheat bread, fried and sugared

Manasa : Mental

Mandal : Society ; organisation

Mandali : Association

Mandir : Temple

Mantra : Sacred syllable or set of words of mystic import

Mantropadesa : Initiation into a mantra

Math : Hindu religious institution

Matrudevobhava : Let your mother be God to you

Matsarya : Jealousy

Maya : Illusive power

Mithya : False ; illusory

...vada : Theory of illusion

Moha : Infatuation ; deluded attachment

Moksha : Liberation, after which there is no birth ; merger in the Absolute

Mudra : Esoteric sign

Muhurta : Auspicious period

Mukti : see Moksha

Muni : Austere person ; one observing silence

Murtis : idols, images

N

Naishthika Brahmachari : Life-long celibate

Nama Japa Yajna : Chanting Lord's Name as spiritual sacrifice

Nama Likhita Japa Yajna : Worship of God, repeatedly writing His Name or Mantra

Nama smaran : Remembrance of the Lord, by chanting His Name

Nama sankirtan : Singing of God's Name

Namaskar : Salutation ; generally prostration

Narayana : The support of all things—Vishnu

Nirakara : Formless

Niranjana : Spotless

Nirguna : Without attributes ; qualityless

...Swarup : Aspect of God without attributes

Nirvana : Liberation ; moksha, absorption in the Absolute

Nirvikalpa samadhi : Superconscious state wherein Nirguna Brahman is attained

Nishkama : Without desire, generally for the fruits of action

.. bhakti : Desireless devotion

O

Oordhva gati : Upward course or movement

P

- Pada pooja* : Worship of the feet of God, saint or holy person
...tirtha : Consecrated water used in the above pooja
Panchamrita : Nectarine preparation of five ingredients—fruit/plantain, honey, jaggery, sugarcandy, and ghee, used in worship
Pandal : Temporary shed made of palm leaves or like material
Parabhakti : Bhakti (devotion) of a jnani
Parasmani : Philosopher's stone
Pariiah : Person belonging to the so-called untouchable classes
Patala : Nether regions
Pishacha : Ghost, ghostlike
Pooja : Worship with due ceremony
...manasa : Mental worship
...shodasopachara : Worship with sixteen different offerings
Poojari : One whose profession is to perform pooja
Poorvashrama : The stage of life before renunciation
Pradakshina : Circumambulation
Prakriti : Nature ; Shakti ; Casual matter
Pranams : Salutations ; prostration
Pranayam : Regulation and control of breath
Prarabdha : Fruits of actions in past lives enjoyed in the present
Prasad : What has been offered to God or saint—usually distributed to devotees
Pratishta : Installation
Pravachana : Religious discourse
Prem : Divine Love
Pucca : Perfect
Pundit : Learned person
Punya : Actions earning pleasant fruit ; merit ; virtue
Puranas : Age-old stories of Hindu mythology
Puris : Fried, unleavened wheat bread

Purohit : Priest

Purusha : Witness aspect of God

Purushottama : Supreme Godhead

Purvashram : Stage in life prior to sannyas (used with reference to sannyasis only)

R

Rajas : Passion, activity

Rajasic : adj. of Rajas

Raja yoga : Yoga described in Patanjali's treatise—system of ashtanga yoga

Ram : God's Name ; one of the ten avatars ; form of address among sadhus

Ramchandra . Avatar of Vishnu ; the hero of the Ramayana

Ramnam : God's name

Ramnavami : Birthday of Sri Rama

Rasagulla : Bengali sweet

Ravana : Ten-headed king of the rakshasas of Lanka, vanquished in battle by Rama

Rishi : Sage ; seer of Truth

Roti : Home-made bread

Rulam : Eatable prepared from broken rice or wheat

S

Sabari : Bhil woman ; ardent devotee of Sri Rama

Sadhaka : Spiritual aspirant

Sadhana : Spiritual practice

Sadhu : Pious or holy person, sannyasi

Sadhya : Goal to reach

Saguna darshan : Vision of God with attributes

...sakshatkar : same as above

...svarup : Aspect of God with attributes

Sagunopasaka : Worshipper of God with attributes

Sahasrara : Thousand petalled lotus in the cerebrum wherein kundalini (Shakti) unites with Shiva

Sakama bhakti : Devotion to gain worldly ends

Sakshatkar : Realisation
Sakshi : Witness
Salagram : Stone emblem of God worshipped by devotees
Samadhi : Superconscious state; (also) the final resting place of a saint
Samans : Articles : things ; baggage
Samata : Equality
Sammelan : Conference ; seminar
Samsar : Cycle of birth and death
Samsari : Householder
Sandhyavandana : Regular prayers offered at dawn, noon and dusk
Sangadosha : Effect of bad company
Sankalpa : Desire ; thought ; mental resolve
Sannyas : Renunciation of worldly ties ; the fourth order
Sannyasi : Monk ; one who has renounced worldly ties
Saree : Lady's garment
Saswat : Eternal
Sat : Reality ; Truth
Sat-chit-anand : Absolute Existence, Consciousness, Bliss
Satsangh : Association with the wise
Satva : Harmony ; purity ; serenity
Satvic : Adj. of Satva
Shamiana : Canopy
Shadvikaras : Six modifications of the mind
Shiva : God of the Hindu trinity (the other two being Vishnu and Brahma)
Siddha : Realised person ; yogi ; perfected being
Siddhis : Psychic powers, eight in number
Sita : Consort of Sri Rama
Sloka : Verse
Smriti : Hindu Code of Law
Srimad Bhagavatam : Sacred book of the Hindus dealing with the avatars of the Lord, the life of Sri Krishna being the main theme

Stotra : Verses in praise
Suddhasatva : Pure satva
Sukhasan : One of the yogic poses
Svaroop : Essential nature, form
Swami : Form of addressing a saannyasi
Swarajya : Self-government

T

Tahsildar : Officer of the revenue department in charge of a taluka
Tamas : Torpor ; darkness
Tamasic : adj. of Tamas
Tamboola : Betel leaf prepared for chewing specially after meals
Tapas : Austerities
Tapasvin : Ascetic
Tilak : Mark on the forehead
Tirtha : Holy or consecrated water
Trigunatita : Beyond the gunas
Trimurtis : Brahma, Vishnu and Siva
Tulsi : Plant sacred to Vishnu
...pooja : Worship of Tulsi
Tyag : Renunciation
Tyagi : Renunciate

U

Uddhava : Devotee of Sri Krishna, instructions to whom are known as Uddhava Gita
Udyog shala : Industrial school
Unmatta : mad
Upadesh : Initiation
Upadhi : Limiting adjunct ; body ; superimposition
Upanayanam : Initiation with the sacred thread into Brahmacharya
Upanishad : Ultimate part of the Vedas dealing with attainment of Gnosis, Wisdom, Knowledge
Urdhvagati : Upward course

V

- Vaikuntha* : Abode of Lord Vishnu
- Vairagya* : Dispassion ; indifference and disgust for worldly objects
- Vaishnavite* : Worshipper of Lord Vishnu
- Valmiki* : The first poet. author of the Ramayana. Began life as a hunter. Initiated into Ram mantra by Sage Narada, he attained the status of a sage
- Vasanas* : Subtle desires ; latent tendencies which motivate worldly actions
- Vedanta* : Philosophy of the Upanishads ; end of the Vedas
- Vedanta Kesari* : Lion of Vedanta: one steeped in Vedanta
- Vedantic* : Pertaining to Vedanta
- Vichara* : Inquiry into the nature of Self
- Vidyalaya* : School
- Vikaras* : Modifications or changes of original position

Vinayaka Chaturthi : Fourth day of the bright half when special worship is offered to the deity Vinayaka, or Ganesh

Viraha : Agony of separation, especially from God

Vishnu : One of Hindu Trinity, the others being Siva and Brahma. His role is one of protection

Vithoba : Famous deity installed in the temple at Pandharpur

Vyavahar : Worldly activity

Y

Yajna : Sacrifice

Yoga : Union of the jiva with God ; (also) method of God-realisation

Yogasana : Postures in hatha yoga

Yogi : Practitioner of yoga ; also one who has realised the Self

Yugas : Four in number, viz., Krita (satya), Treta, Dvapara and Kali

Yogakshemam vahamyaham : Your (devotee's) welfare is My concern.

OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

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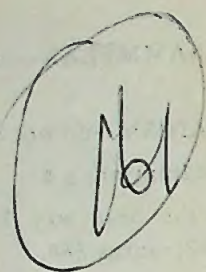
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OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM



ERRATA

Page	Line from the top	Correction
33	28	For 'takan', read 'taken'
35	15	Add 'the' after 'resumed'
39	19	For 'daily for', read 'daily in'
50	12	For 'He said', read 'He says'
123	32	For 'brought', read 'bought'
125	27	For 'a nd', read 'and'
231	39	Delete question mark.
235	34	For 'narrates about', read 'narrates all'
237	24	For 'are they photos', read 'are those photos'
266	5	For 'po ms', read 'poems'
367	32	For 'was never tired of', read 'never tired of'
390	28	For 'Is i t', read 'Is it'
419	4	For 'was never tired of', read 'never tire of'
449	18	For 'New year' Day', read 'New year's Day'
492	20	For 'This is the way how God talks', read 'This is the way God talks'
497	18	For 'onstantly', read 'constantly'
497	18	For 'all-powe rful', read 'all-powerful'
500	19	For 'Ramdas coming', read 'Ramdas's coming'
541	25	For 'examination on', read 'examination in'

